

THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

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ENGLISH LITERATURE
IN SCHOOLS

A List of
AUTHORS AND WORKS FOR
SUCCESSIVE STAGES
OF STUDY

New and revised edition

1948

3s. 6d.

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN SCHOOLS

A LIST OF AUTHORS AND WORKS FOR SUCCESSIVE STAGES OF STUDY

IT is encouraging to watch the advance which English studies have undoubtedly made in recent years in our schools;¹ but far more must be done if our national literature is to take the place rightly due to its importance, variety, and power. Too often a child's literary outlook is restricted to one or two authors, around a portion of whose work examining bodies revolve in a fixed orbit, attended by a cluster of satellites in the shape of school editions. The range of a child's reading must be sufficiently wide to give the zest and stimulus that alone can make the schoolroom a starting-point for lifelong love and study. Hence it seemed worth while to review the entire field of English literature with a view to suggesting a greater choice of authors, and at the same time to indicate in some detail either whole works or chosen passages from which teachers should be able to make a selection for class study or home reading.

Any carefully planned course of reading will necessarily be based upon the great writers. They stand out in each period as the natural centres, and we return to them to take our bearings. It can hardly be disputed that this representative method, wherever it is practicable, is the ideal method, and that the great writers themselves gain by it in the most striking manner. Thus, if a study of the lyric poems of Milton can be followed up by a judicious selection from Donne, Jonson, Crashaw, Herbert, Herrick, Marvell, Lovelace, and Suckling—some of whom exhibit a certain affinity, and others a complete antithesis, when thus presented in contact with their great contemporary—one significant fact that emerges from this combined study is the undisputed pre-eminence of Milton, while, over and above, a pupil will have gained a connected idea of the period and a critical knowledge of one phase of the English lyric.

Four stages have been mapped out for the school course:

- I. For children of twelve, who will mainly study narrative;
- II. For children of thirteen and a half, who will pass on to the lyric and the essay;
- III. For children of fifteen, who will make their first acquaintance with such writers as Chaucer and Spenser;
- IV. A final stage, which begins at the age of sixteen and a half, involves a wide choice of reading, and offers full scope to the powers of the teacher.

¹ The course of reading here proposed has been drawn up mainly with an eye to the needs of English schools, but it is hoped that it may be found useful outside these limits.

Care has been taken to graduate the work as far as possible, and the following practical hints may be given: (1) Where the exigencies of the time-table prevent systematic study, teachers can still read to their classes an illustrative selection, and it is hoped that they will find the present leaflet useful in such cases. (2) Any prose or poetry proposed for an earlier stage can be carried on to a later. This applies especially to the plays of Shakespeare, which will gain by the fuller treatment possible with older pupils; and the scattered selections from any given writer can be grouped for purposes of closer study. (3) Older pupils will learn a valuable lesson in the art of criticism if they are able to compare the treatment of a similar theme by two different writers. Parallel or contrasted passages have therefore been inserted in the later stages. Thus, the marriage of the Thames and the Medway in Spenser's *Faerie Queene* can be taken with the marriage of the Thame and the Isis in Drayton's *Polyolbion*, the winter landscape of Thomson's *Seasons* with that of Cowper's *Task*, and the fight of the unknown father and son in Arnold's *Sohrab and Rustum* with the similar fight of the brothers in Swinburne's *Tale of Balen*.

A noteworthy feature of the present list is the inclusion in it of much recent and contemporary work. From an educational point of view it should seem obvious that the writers of our own time, thinking our thoughts and clothing them in vivid and beautiful speech, have a signal claim on our regard and can powerfully help to educate our children.

Some special points may be noted:

(1) A few of the works and selections cited are inaccessible for teaching purposes, but they need not remain so, and, in any case, a teacher who wishes to use them will get access to them.

(2) The recommendation of school editions has been avoided as far as possible.

(3) The choice of Shakespearian plays has been determined by the Association's leaflet on *The Teaching of Shakespeare in Schools* (No. 7). Teachers are referred to this for a full discussion of both material and method.

(4) Except occasionally and for some special reason, songs, sonnets, and other very short lyrics have been excluded; but it is assumed that at every stage constant use is made of an anthology of such poems.

STAGE I (*Age 12-13½*)

POEMS, CHIEFLY NARRATIVE

- EARLY BALLADS: Chevy Chase.
 Sir Patrick Spens.
 Robin Hood and Allan-a-Dale.
 Robin Hood rescuing the Widow's Three Sons.
 Robin Hood's Death and Burial.
 Kinmont Willie.
 Hughie the Graeme.
 Helen of Kirconnell.
 Get Up and Bar the Door.
 Edward, Edward.
 The Twa Sisters o' Binnorie.
 The Douglas Tragedy.
 Lord Randal.
- SHORT POEMS (mainly narrative, to be used as a continuation of the Ballads):
- COWPER: John Gilpin.
 The Loss of the Royal George.
- CAMPBELL: Lord Ullin's Daughter.
 The Battle of the Bannock.
- BYRON: The Destruction of Sennacherib.
- SCOTT: Rosabelle.
 Lochinvar.
- WOLFE: The Burial of Sir John Moore.
- KEATS: Meg Merrilies.
- DOBELL: Keith of Ravelston.
- KINGSLEY: The Knight's Leap.
- MORRIS (W.): Shameful Death.
- BLAKE: Piping down the Valleys Wild.
 The Echoing Green.
 The Lamb.
 Infant Joy.
 Night.
 Holy Thursday.
 The Little Black Boy.
 Laughing Song.
 Spring.
 Nurse's Song.
 The Fly.
 The Angel.
 The Tyger.
- SCOTT: The Lay of the Last Minstrel.
 The Lady of the Lake.
- COLERIDGE: The Ancient Mariner.
- TENNYSON: The Revenge.
 The Day-Dream.
 The Lady of Shalott.
 Morte d'Arthur.
- LONGFELLOW: Hiawatha.
 Tales of a Wayside Inn.
 The Building of the Ship.
- ROSSETTI (D. G.): The White Ship.
- ROSSETTI (Christina): Goblin Market.
- ARNOLD: Balder Dead.
 Sohrab and Rustum.
 The Forsaken Merman.

ENGLISH LITERATURE IN SCHOOLS

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| MORRIS (W.): | Episodes from the Life and Death of Jason: The Winning of the Fleece (Books VI-X). The Death of Jason (Book XVII). Stories from the Earthly Paradise: Atalanta's Race. The Man born to be King. The Proud King. The Son of Croesus. The Golden Apples. |
| BROWNING: | How they brought the Good News from Ghent to Aix. |
| DAVIDSON: | A Runnable Stag. |
| NEWBOLT: | He Fell Among Thieves. |
| KIPLING: | The Last Chantey. The Liner She's a Lady. Song of the Banjo. Ballad of East and West. The Fiddler of Dooney. The Stolen Child. |
| YEATS: | The Bells of Heaven. |
| HODGSON: | Time, You Old Gipsy Man. Eve. |
| CHESTERTON: | Song of the Dog Quoodle. |
| DE LA MARE: | Three Jolly Farmers. The Listeners. Silver. The Scribe. |
| MASEFIELD: | A Ballad of John Silver. The Yarn of the 'Loch Achray'. Cargoes. Sea-Fever. |
| GIBSON: | The Ice-Cart. Flannan Isle. The Tiger. Snug in my Easy Chair. |
| MONRO: | Milk for the Cat. |
| COLUM: | An Old Woman of the Roads. A Cradle Song. |
| STEPHENS: | The Snare. The Shell. In the Poppy Field. |
| FLECKER: | The Old Ships. War Song of the Saracens. |
| ELIOT: | Macavity: The Mystery Cat. Mungojerrie and Rumpeltazer. |
| TURNER (W. J.): | Romance. The Caves of Auvergne. |
| SORLEY: | The Song of the Ungirt Runners. |
| GRANTS (Robert): | Star-Talk. The Philatelist Royal. |

DRAMA

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| SHAKESPEARE: | Julius Caesar. King Henry V. The Merchant of Venice. A Midsummer Night's Dream. |
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IMAGINATIVE PROSE

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| BUNYAN: | The Pilgrim's Progress. |
| SWIFT: | Gulliver's Travels (Parts I and II). |
| SCOTT: | Tales of a Grandfather. Ivanhoe. |
| DICKENS: | A Christmas Carol. |
| HAWTHORNE: | A Wonder Book. Tanglewood Tales. |
| KINGSLEY: | Hereward the Wake. The Heroes. |
| STEVENSON: | Treasure Island. |
| HUGHES: | Tom Brown's Schooldays. |
| KIPLING: | The Jungle Book. The Second Jungle Book. Puck of Pook's Hill. |
| GRAHAME: | The Wind in the Willows. |
| BUCHAN: | Prestor John. |
| JEROME: | Three Men in a Boat. |
| WHITE: | The Sword in the Stone. |

TRAVEL AND ADVENTURE

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| RALEGH: | The Last Fight of the Revenge. |
| ANSON: | A Voyage round the World. |
| WATERTON: | Wanderings in South America. |

STAGE II (*Age 13½-15*)

POEMS, CHIEFLY LONGER LYRICS

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| EARLY BALLADS: | Thomas the Rhymer. The Wife of Usher's Well. The Twa Corbies. Hynd Horn. 'O waly, waly, up the bank.' Rare Willie drowned in Yarrow. Jolly Wat. Helen of Kirconnel. The Gay Goshawk. Fair Annie. Young Walters. |
| SKELTON: | The Book of Philip Sparrow. |
| DRAYTON: | The Ballad of Agincourt. Nymphidia. |
| MILTON: | L'Allegro. Il Penseroso. Lycidas. Invocation to Light (<i>Paradise Lost</i> , III. 1-55). |
| HERRICK: | Corinna's Going a-Maying (<i>Hesperides</i> , no. 178). The Hock-cart, or Harvest Home (250). Oberon's Feast (293). The Country Life (664). A Thanksgiving to God for His House (<i>Noble Numbers</i> , 47). |
| SUCKLING: | Ballad of a Wedding. |
| DRYDEN: | Alexander's Feast. |
| GRAY: | The Bard. Ode on a Distant Prospect of Eton College. Elegy in a Country Churchyard. |

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| COLLINS: | Ode to Evening. Ode to Liberty. |
| GOLDSMITH: | The Traveller. The Deserted Village. |
| COWPER: | Lines on the Receipt of his Mother's Picture. |
| BURNS: | The Two Dogs. |
| SCOTT: | Marmion. |
| WORDSWORTH: | Hart-leap Well. Brougham Castle. Fidelity. The Poet in his Boyhood (Prelude, I. 301-463). Tintern Abbey. |
| COLERIDGE: | Kubla-Khan. |
| BYRON: | Childe Harold, Canto III. The Isles of Greece. 'And thou art dead, as young and fair.' Epistle to Augusta. |
| SHELLEY: | Arethusa. The Cloud. |
| KEATS: | Isabella. The Eve of Saint Mark. The Eve of St. Agnes. La Belle Dame Sans Merci. |
| HOOD: | The Song of the Shirt. |
| MACAULAY: | The Armada. Naseby. |
| POE: | The Raven. The Bells. |
| ROSSETTI (D. G.): | The King's Tragedy. |
| BROWNING: | Hervé Riel. |
| TENNYSON: | The Brook. Mariana. Mariana in the South. Sir Galahad. A Dream of Fair Women. The Lotos-Eaters. The Charge of the Light Brigade. The Charge of the Heavy Brigade. Lucknow. Ode on the Death of the Duke of Wellington. Enoch Arden. Idylls of the King. |
| HARDY: | Weather. |
| BLUNT: | The Old Squire. |
| BRIDGES: | London Snow. |
| BEECHING: | Prayers. |
| KIPLING: | The English Flag. The Song of the English. The Native Born. The Destroyers. White Horses. Sussex. The White Man's Burden. A Charm. 'Cities and Thrones and Powers.' |
| YEATS: | The Lake Isle of Innisfree. |
| BINYON: | For the Fallen. |
| BELLOC: | Lord Lundy. The South Country. Tarantella. |

LIST OF AUTHORS AND WORKS

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| DAVIES: | Leisure. Thunderstorms. The Time of Dreams. A Great Time. The Kingfisher. Age and Youth. |
| HODGSON: | The Bull. The Song of Honour. The Gipsy Girl. |
| DE LA MARE: | Farewell. All That's Past. |
| CHESTERTON: | Lepanto. The Donkey. The Rolling English Road. The Secret People. The Praise of Dust. The Ballad of the White Horse. |
| BOTTOMLEY: | Atlantis. To Iron-founders and Others. The End of the World. Babel: the Gate of God. |
| THOMAS (Edward): | Roads. Words. Lights Out. October. |
| MASEFIELD: | The Rider at the Gate. Fragments. Laugh and Be Merry. |
| GIBSON: | Jungle Drums. The Blue-Peter. The Golden Room. The Kites. |
| MONRO: | Solitude. |
| PALMER: | The Red Grouse. |
| ARMSTRONG: | Miss Thompson Goes Shopping. |
| FLECKER: | Brumana. To a Poet a Thousand Years Hence. Gates of Damascus. |
| LAWRENCE (D. H.): | Snake. Bat. |
| YOUNG (Andrew): | The Lane. The Secret Wood. The Roman Wall. March Hares. Late Autumn. Culbin Sands. Wiltshire Downs. |
| SASSOON: | Counter Attack. Everyone Sang. |
| BROOKE: | The Soldier. The Great Lover. The Old Vicarage, Grantchester. The Fish. Heaven. |
| MUIR: | The Castle. |
| GRENFELL: | Into Battle. To a Black Greyhound. |
| ELIOT: | Journey of the Magi. |
| SITWELL (Osbert): | Mrs. Hague. Mr. Nutch. |

SACKVILLE-WEST
(Victoria):

Sailing Ships.
The Greater Caus.
A Saxon Song.
Extracts from 'The Land', e.g. The Island; The Land;
The Country Habit; Craftsmen.

BLUNDEN:

Almswomen.
The Pike.
The Midnight Skaters.
Forefathers.
The Barn.

DRAMA

SHAKESPEARE:

Twelfth Night.
As You Like It.
Richard III.
Macbeth.

Ed. J. W. MARRIOTT: One-Act Plays of To-Day (Series I-VII).

IMAGINATIVE PROSE

MALORY:

Episodes from the Morte d'Arthur.
Arthur as King (Book I, ch. iii, 'Then stood the
realm in great jeopardy' . . . -vii).
Merlin and Excalibur (ibid. xxiii-xxv).
Refusal of Tribute and War with Rome (V, i-v,
viii).
Balin (II, i-ix, xvii, 'And so he rode forth, and
within three days' . . . -xix).
Beaumains (VII, i-xxiii).
The Sancgreall (XIII and XVII).
Lancelot and the Maid of Astolat (XVIII).
The Death of Arthur (XXI, i-vii).
The Deaths of Guinevere and Lancelot (ibid.
viii-xiii).

THE MABINOGION:

Lady Charlotte Guest's Translation:
Geraint the Son of Erbin.
Peredur the Son of Evrawc.
The Dream of Maxen Wledig.

MORRIS (W.):

The Story of the Glittering Plain.

ESSAYS

ADDISON:

Papers on the Club (The Spectator, nos. 1, 2, 12, 34,
105, 106, 108, 110, 112, 115, 117, 122, 123, 125,
126, 130, 131, 269, 295, 329, 335, 383, 517, 530,
549, 550).

STEELE:

The Vision of Mirza (ibid., 159).
Essays from the Tatler:
89. Mr. Bickerstaffe on Himself.
181. Memories of Childhood.
95, 114. A Visit to a Friend, and the Death of the
Mother.
87. A Letter from the Wars.
77. Fashionable Affectations.
248. Advice to Ladies on Exercise and Education.
132. The Trumpet Club and its Members.

- GOLDSMITH:** Letters from a Citizen of the World:
 13. Westminster Abbey.
 21. The Chinese goes to see a Play.
 26. The Man in Black.
 28-9 (29-30). A Club of Authors.
 60 (61). Advice to a Son.
 69 (70). Whang the Miller.
 76 (77). The Behaviour of a Shopkeeper.
 111 (112). An Election described.
 116 (117). A City Night-piece.
- JOHNSON:** Selections from the Idler:
 5. Proposals for a Female Army.
 7. Scheme for News-writers.
 8. Plan of Military Discipline.
 16. Drugget's Retirement.
 40. The Art of Advertising.
 60-1. Minim the Critic.
 71. Dick Shifter's Rural Excursion.
- MACAULAY:** Clive.
 Hastings.
 Bunyan.
 Johnson (Biography in Miscellaneous Writings).
- HUNT (Leigh):** On the Graces and Anxieties of Pig-Driving.
 A 'Now' Descriptive of a Hot Day.
 A 'Now' Descriptive of a Cold Day.
- LAMB:** Christ's Hospital.
 Mackery End, in Hertfordshire.
 My First Play.
 The Praise of Chimney-sweepers.
 A Dissertation upon Roast Pig.
 Blakesmoor in H—shire.
- DE QUINCEY:** The English Mail-coach.
- HAZLITT:** On Going a Journey.
 Indian Jugglers.
 The Prize Fight.
 On the Conduct of Life.
- DICKENS:** The Uncommercial Traveller, chapters ii, vi, ix, xi, xv,
 xvii, xxiv, xxvii, xxix.
- RUSKIN:** Sesame and Lilies.
- STEVENSON:** The English Admirals (Virginibus Puerisque).
- BELLOC:** On Something.
 On Nothing.
- CHESTERTON:** The Defendant.
- LYND:** Selected Essays.

HISTORICAL, DESCRIPTIVE, AND BIOGRAPHICAL PROSE

- FROISSART:** Lord Berners's Translation (Globe edition, by G. C. Macaulay).
- LORD BERNERS:** A Selection (ed. Pinto).
- NORTH:** Translation of Plutarch's Lives: e.g. Camillus, Coriolanus, Fabius Maximus, Marius, Sulla, Caesar, Brutus, Cicero, Themistocles, Pericles, Aristides, Pyrrhus, Alexander, Demosthenes.
- HAKLUYT:** Voyages (Hakluyt Society's edition):
 The Enterprise of John Foxe in delivering 266 Christians at Alexandria, 1577 (vol. V, pp. 153-64).

HAKLUYT (*continued*):

Frobisher's Three Voyages to find a North-West Passage (VII. 250-375).

Davis's Second Voyage to find a North-West Passage (*ibid.* 393-408).

Sir Humphrey Gilbert (VIII, pp. 65-77, 'The manner how our admiral was lost').

The First Voyage to Virginia, by Philip Amadas and Arthur Barlowe (*ibid.* 297-310).

Drake's West Indian Voyage, 1585 (X, pp. 97-120).

PEPYS:

DEFOE:

BOSWELL:

The Fire of London (Diary, ed. Wheatley, V, pp. 417-31).

Journal of the Plague Year (selection).

Passages from the Life of Johnson (Oxford edition, 2 vols., 1904):

Childhood (vol. I, pp. 24-34).

Life at Oxford (pp. 39-53).

Marriage (pp. 64-7).

First Visit to London (pp. 70-2).

'London' (pp. 80-8).

Langton and Beauclerk (pp. 163-6).

The Dictionary and Lord Chesterfield (pp. 124-9, 170-7, 197-9).

Boswell introduced to Johnson (pp. 260-2).

Goldsmith (pp. 275-8, 398, 496-7, 500-1, 511-15, 517-18).

Dinner at Boswell's Lodgings (pp. 388-91).

A Day at Greenwich (pp. 305-9).

Meeting with George III (pp. 358-63).

Death of Catharine Chambers (p. 364).

Mr. Strahan's Apprentice (pp. 567-8).

The Use of Seville Oranges (pp. 571-2).

A Visit to Lichfield (pp. 669-71).

Dinner with John Wilkes (vol. II, pp. 46-52).

Johnson's Cat Hodge (p. 478).

Johnson's Death (pp. 642-7).

LOCKHART:

Life of Sir Walter Scott: an illustrative selection to give the most vivid picture of Scott's life at different stages, e.g. chapters i, ii, xi, xii, xv-xvii, xix, xxvi, xxviii, xxxv, xli, xlix, lvi, lxi, lxiii, lxxxiii.

MACAULAY:

Episodes from the History of England:

The Expedition of Monmouth (ch. v down to the words 'the dust of Monmouth mingled').

The Seven Bishops (ch. viii).

The Siege of Londonderry (ch. xii).

The Battle of Killiecrankie (ch. xiii).

The Battle of the Boyne (ch. xvi).

The Massacre of Glencoe (ch. xviii).

The Battle of La Hogue (ch. xviii).

COBBETT:

Rural Rides. (Either special rides or special counties can be selected.)

BORROW:

Lavengro.

The Bible in Spain.

The Romany Rye.

FROUDE:

English Seamen in the Sixteenth Century.

MOTLEY:

Selections from the Rise of the Dutch Republic:

The Abdication of Charles V (Part I, ch. i).

The Second Siege of Leyden (IV, ch. ii).

The Death of William the Silent (VI, ch. vii).

JEFFERIES:

Wild Life in a Southern County.

HUDSON:

The Gamekeeper at Home.

A Naturalist in La Plata.

NOVELS

- SCOTT: Old Mortality.
Waverley.
Kenilworth.
Quentin Durward.
- DICKENS: A Tale of Two Cities.
David Copperfield.
Barnaby Rudge.
The Cricket on the Hearth.
The Cloister and the Hearth.
- READE: Westward Ho!
- KINGSLEY: Lorna Doone.
- BLACKMORE: Kidnapped.
- STEVENSON: The Merry Men and Other Tales.
The Black Arrow.
- CONAN DOYLE: Micah Clark.
The White Company.
The Refugees.
The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes.
- RIDER HAGGARD: King Solomon's Mines.
Allan Quartermain.
- KIPLING: Stalky and Co.
Kim.
- MASEFIELD: Lost Endeavour.
Jim Davis.
Capt. Margaret.
Sard Harker.
Odtaa.
- VACHELL: The Hill.
- JACOBS: Many Cargoes.
A Master of Craft.
- 'Q': The Splendid Spur.
Dead Man's Rock.
Short Stories.
- BUCHAN: Greenmantle.
- WALPOLE: The Thirty-Nine Steps.
Jeremy.
Jeremy and Hamlet.
Jeremy at Crale.

STAGE III (*Age 15-16½*)

POEMS

- CHAUCER: The Prologue to the Canterbury Tales.
The Knight's Tale.
The Nun's Priest's Tale.
The Prioress's Tale.
The Pardoner's Tale.
The Parliament of Fowls.
The Prologue to the Legend of Good Women.
- SPENSER: The Faerie Queene:
Books I and II.
The Masque of Cupid and the delivery of Amoret
(III. xii).
The Marriage of the Thames and the Medway (IV.
xi. 8-53).
Artegall and the Giant (V. ii. 30-54).

- SPENSER (*continued*): Mercilla and Duessa (V. ix. 20-30).
Calidore and Pastorella (VI. ix).
The Procession of the Months and Seasons (VII. vii).
Prothalamion.
- DRAYTON: Selections from Polyolbion:
Guy of Warwick (Song xii. 129-334).
Warwickshire, its birds and hunting (xiii. 8-161).
The Marriage of the Thames and the Isis (xv. 1-280).
Robin Hood (xxvi. 305-58).
(The separate counties of 'Polyolbion' might be taken by the schools situated in them, in each case with the prelude of the First Song, ll. 1-42.)
- FLETCHER (John): Lyrics from The Faithful Shepherdess:
The Satyr (I. i. 47-101, V. v. 236-57, ed. Greg).
Morning Song (V. i. 1-17).
The Evening Knell (II. i).
Amoret and the River-god (III. i. 362-435).
Hymn to Pan (I. ii. 29-42).
- MILTON: Comus.
Paradise Lost, Books I and II.
- MARVELL: Lyrics in Palgrave's Golden Treasury or in The Oxford Book of English Verse.
- DRYDEN: Selections from the Fables:
Palamon and Arcite.
The Cock and the Fox.
The Flower and the Leaf.
Absalom and Achitophel, Part I.
- POPE: The Rape of the Lock.
- THOMSON: Winter (The Seasons).
- GRAY: The Progress of Poesy.
Hymn to Adversity.
- COWPER: The Winter Evening (The Task, Book IV).
- BURNS: Tam o' Shanter.
The Cottar's Saturday Night.
Lyrics in Palgrave's Golden Treasury.
- BLAKE: Poetical Sketches.
Songs of Innocence.
Songs of Experience.
- CRABBE: Peter Grimes (The Borough, xxii).
Procrastination (Tales of the Hall, iv).
The Frank Courtship (vi).
The Lover's Journey (x).
Sir Owen Dale (xii).
Delay has Danger (xiii).
Smugglers and Poachers (xxi).
Sir Eustace Grey.
- WORDSWORTH: Selections, e.g. Matthew Arnold's.
- COLERIDGE: Christabel.
Youth and Age.
Frost at Midnight.
Dejection: an Ode.
The Eolian Harp.
This Lime-tree Bower my Prison.
A Tombless Epitaph.
To Wordsworth ('Friend of the wise!').
Prometheus Unbound.
Adonais.
- SHELLEY: Alastor.
The Sensitive Plant.

- SHELLEY (*continued*): Lyrics in Palgrave's Golden Treasury or in The Oxford Book of English Verse.
- KEATS: Hyperion.
The Eve of Saint Agnes.
Lyrics in Palgrave's Golden Treasury or in The Oxford Book of English Verse.
- BYRON: Childe Harold, Canto IV.
Darkness.
The Dream.
Lyrics in Palgrave's Golden Treasury or in The Oxford Book of English Verse.
- TENNYSON: Ulysses.
Tithonus.
Oenone.
The Death of Oenone.
Tiresias.
The Gardener's Daughter.
The Princess.
Locksley Hall.
Locksley Hall Sixty Years After.
The Northern Cobbler.
- BROWNING: The Patriot.
The Glove.
The Italian in England.
Saul.
Home-thoughts, from Abroad.
Home-thoughts, from the Sea.
Before.
After.
Pheidippides.
- ROSSETTI (D. G.): The Blessed Damozel.
- WHITMAN: Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking.
When Lilacs last in the Doorway Bloom'd.
O Captain! my Captain!
- ARNOLD: The Scholar-Gipsy.
Thyrsis.
Westminster Abbey.
Rugby Chapel.
Memorial Verses.
Youth and Nature.
Requiescat.
A Southern Night.
Dover Beach.
- NEWBOLT: The Island Race.
- KIPLING: M'Andrew's Hymn.
The Mary Gloster.
- HARDY: I Am the One.
In Time of 'The Breaking of Nations'.
Afterwards.
An Ancient to Ancients.
The Darkling Thrush.
The Oxen.
A Private Man on Public Men.
- HOPKINS: Pied Beauty.
Felix Randal.
Windhover.
Inversnaid.
- BRIDGES: A Passer-by.
Cheddar Pinks.
Emily Brontë.

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| MEYNELL: | Renouncement. The Shepherdess. Chimes. |
| THOMPSON (Francis): | Daisy. The Hound of Heaven. To a Snowflake. |
| HOUSMAN: | The Cherry Tree. The Deserter. Epitaph on an Army of Mercenaries. The Chestnut Casts his Flambeaux. |
| COLERIDGE (Mary): | A Huguenot. Our Lady. Chillingham. |
| YEATS: | Byzantium. Sailing to Byzantium. Coole and Ballylee, 1931. Meru. The Wild Swans at Coole. A Dialogue of Sense and Soul. An Acre of Grass. |
| BARING: | In Memoriam, A.H. Vale. <i>Diffugere Nives</i> , 1917. |
| DE LA MARE: | The Listeners. Speech. Dreams. The Corner Stone. The Bottle. To a Candle. A Portrait. |
| MASEFIELD: | Reynard the Fox. |
| PALMER: | Prayer for Rain. Saint Joan. The Wounded Hawk. Airmen of the Battle of Britain. |
| ABERCROMBIE: | Marriage Song. Epitaph. The Stream's Song. The Moon Hath Not. Nothing Is Easy. |
| STEPHENS: | |
| LAWRENCE (D. H.): | Kangaroo. Man and Bat. Baby Tortoise. Cypresses. |
| SASSOON: | The Death-Bed. The Dug-Out. A Working Party. Stonehenge. Grandeur of Ghosts. At the Grave of Henry Vaughan. Antiquities. |
| SITWELL (Edith): | Colonel Fantock. The Poet Laments the Coming of Old Age. A Mother to Her Dead Child. The Little Ghost Who Died for Love. |
| MUIR: | The Journey. The Riders. The Stationary Journey. The Confirmation. |

- HAMILTON
(G. Rostrevor): The Ivy.
The Runner.
- ELIOT: The Hollow Men.
Portrait of a Lady.
Gerontion.
- ROSENBERG (Isaac): Dead Man's Dump.
Break of Day in the Trenches.
Returning, We Hear the Larks.
- OWEN (Wilfred): Strange Meeting.
Spring Offensive.
Anthem for Doomed Youth.
À Terre.
- NICHOLS (Robert): Asleep.
The Attack.
Renouncement.
The Sprig of Lime.
Night Rhapsody.
- SORLEY: To Poets.
All the Hills and Vales Among.
'Such is Death.'
- BLUNDEN: Mole-Catcher.
The Veteran.
The March Bee.
Report on Experience.
The Boy on Leave.
- CAMPBELL (Roy): Choosing a Mast.
Horses on the Camargue.
Tristan da Cunha.
- LEWIS (Cecil Day): The Stand-To.
The Watching Post.
A Time to Dance.
Opening Chorus for a Noah Play.
Now the Full-Throated Daffodils.
The Poet.
- AUDEN: As I Walked Out One Evening.
Hearing of Harvests Rotting in the Valleys.
O Love, the Interest Itself in Thoughtless Heaven.
Lay Your Sleeping Head, My Love.
O What is That Sound which so Thrills the Ear.
- SPENDER: I Think Continually.
The Express.
- LEWIS (Alun): The Unknown Soldier.
All Day It Has Rained.
Raiders' Dawn.
The Soldier.
- KEYES (Sidney): The Wilderness.
Advice for a Journey.
The Walking Woman.

DRAMA

- SHAKESPEARE: Henry IV, Parts I and II.
The Tempest.
Much Ado About Nothing.
Richard II.
Hamlet.
- MARLOWE: Edward II.
- JONSON: The Alchemist.
- GOLDSMITH: She Stoops to Conquer.

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| SHERIDAN: | The Rivals. The Critic. |
| SHAW: | St. Joan. |
| CHESTERTON: | Magic. |
| FLECKER: | Hassan. |
| JACOBS: | The Monkey's Paw. |
| BARRIE: | Dear Brutus. Mary Rose. The Will. |
| GALSWORTHY: | The Silver Box. Strife. Justice. The Skin Game. Loyalties. |
| DRINKWATER: | Abraham Lincoln. Mary Stuart. Oliver Cromwell. Robert E. Lee. |
| ELIOT: | Murder in the Cathedral. |

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| MORE: | Richard III. |
| LATIMER: | Sermon on the Ploughers. |
| BACON: | Selected Essays: I. Of Truth. IV. Of Revenge. VII. Of Parents and Children. XI. Of Great Place. XVIII. Of Travel. XLVI. Of Gardens. L. Of Studies. |
| CHARACTER WRITINGS OF THE XVII CENTURY (Henry Morley's edition of Richard Aldington's <i>Book of Characters</i> , including Overbury, Hall, Earle, Breton, and Butler). | |
| COWLEY: | Selected Essays. I. Of Liberty. II. Of Solitude. III. Of Obscurity. V. The Garden. XI. Of Myself. |
| BROWNE (SIR T.): | Urn Burial. |
| FULLER: | The Worthies of England. (As with Drayton's 'Polyolbion', it is suggested that schools might take the 'Worthies' of their own county.) |
| WALTON: | The Compleat Angler. Lives of Donne, Wotton, Hooker, Herbert, and Sanderson. |
| TAYLOR (Jeremy): | Two Sermons on Prayer. |
| DRYDEN: | Essay on Dramatic Poesy. Preface to the Fables. |
| SWIFT: | The Battle of the Books. A Modest Proposal. Letter of Advice to a Young Poet. |
| ADDISON: | Selections from Papers Contributed to the Spectator (ed. T. Arnold). |
| JOHNSON: | Lives of the Poets: Addison. Dryden. Pope. Smith (for Garrick). |

- GIBBON: The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire:
 Julian (chapters xxii-iv).
 Alaric (xxx-xxxi).
 Attila (xxxiv-v).
 Roman Law (xliv).
 Constantinople (xvii).
- COWPER: Letters, e.g. E. V. Lucas's or Canon Benham's selection.
- GRAY: Letters, e.g. C. S. Northup's selection.
- SHELLEY: Letters, e.g. R. Garnett's selection.
- KEATS: Letters.
- LAMB: Essays and Letters.
- LANDOR: Selections, e.g. Sir S. Colvin's.
- HAZLITT: My First Acquaintance with Poets.
 Farewell to Essay-writing.
- CARLYLE: Heroes and Hero-Worship.
 Episodes from the French Revolution:
 The Taking of the Bastille (Part I, Book V, ch. v-vii).
 The Flight to Varennes (Part II, Book IV, ch. ii-viii).
 The Swiss Guard (ibid., Book VI, ch. vii).
 Trial and Death of the King (Part III, Book II, ch. vi-viii).
 Marie-Antoinette (ibid., Book IV, ch. vii).
 Danton and Robespierre (ibid., Book VI, ch. ii and vii).
- RUSKIN: Unto this Last.
 The Two Paths.
- ARNOLD (M.): Essays in Criticism (second series).
- STEVENSON: An Inland Voyage.
 Travels with a Donkey in the Cevennes.
 Memories and Portraits.
- KINGLAKE: Eothen.
- HUDSON (W. H.): Birds in a Village.
 Far Away and Long Ago.
- DAVIES (W. H.): Autobiography of a Super-Tramp.
- BEERBOHM: The Works of Max Beerbohm.
 Seven Men.
- BELLOC: The Path to Rome.
 On Nothing.
- CHESTERTON: All Things Considered.
 The Uses of Diversity.
- A Selection of Essays, e.g. Essays of To-Day.

NOVELS

- GOLDSMITH: The Vicar of Wakefield.
- BURNEY (Fanny): Evelina.
- AUSTEN (Jane): Pride and Prejudice.
 Maid Marian.
- PEACOCK: Nightmare Abbey.
- DICKENS: The Pickwick Papers.
 Bleak House.
 Great Expectations.
 Esmond.
- THACKERAY: The Newcomes.
- LYTTON (Bulwer): The Last Days of Pompeii.
- ELIOT (George): The Mill on the Floss.
 Silas Marner.

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| MRS. GASKELL: | Cranford. Mary Barton. |
| COLLINS: | The Moonstone. |
| STEVENSON: | The Master of Ballantrae. |
| HARDY: | Under the Greenwood Tree. |
| FAULKNER (J. Meade): | Moonfleet. |
| WEYMAN: | A Gentleman of France. |
| HUDSON (W. H.): | The Purple Land. Green Mansions. |
| CONRAD: | Youth and Other Tales. |
| WELLS: | The Time Machine. The War of the Worlds. The Sleeper Awakes. The First Men in the Moon. In the Days of the Comet. The History of Mr. Polly. Kipps. |
| BENNETT: | The Card. The Old Wives' Tale. Clayhanger. |
| CHESTERTON: | The Napoleon of Notting Hill. The Father Brown Stories. The Flying Inn. The Man Who Was Thursday. The Club of Queer Trades. |
| DE LA MARE: | Henry Brocken. |
| PRESTLEY: | The Good Companions. |
| MACDONNELL: | England, Their England. |

STAGE IV (Age 16½-18)

A high standard of work is possible at this stage: authors, periods, or special forms of literature can be studied, if necessary, in a yearly course. Hence a few suggestions are offered on broad lines; a teacher can easily develop them with pupils at the ages of seventeen and eighteen.

1. *Literature of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.* It would be impossible to make a complete list of the authors and works which might profitably be studied under this heading: only a few illustrative selections can be given. But, whatever subject may be chosen for pupils at this stage, it is important that they should not leave school without some knowledge of recent and contemporary writers.

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| TENNYSON: | In Memoriam. The Two Voices. The Vision of Sin. Lucretius. To Virgil. Milton (Alcaics). To the Rev. F. D. Maurice. St. Simeon Stylites. Northern Farmer, old style. Northern Farmer, new style. |
| BROWNING: | Pippa Passes. Abt Vogler. The Bishop Orders his Tomb. The Epistle of Karshish. |

- BROWNING** (*continued*): Pictor Ignotus.
 Andrea del Sarto.
 Fra Lippo Lippi.
 One Word More.
 In a Year.
 The Italian in England.
 The Englishman in Italy.
 In a Gondola.
 In a Balcony.
 The Last Ride Together.
 Waring.
 A Grammarian's Funeral.
 Holy Cross Day.
 Saul.
 Rabbi ben Ezra.
 Caliban upon Setebos.
 Prospice.
- SWINBURNE**: Atalanta in Calydon.
 Selections from Songs before Sunrise:
 Prelude.
 The Halt before Rome.
 Mater Triumphalis.
 Tiresias.
 The Oblation.
- MEREDITH**: In Time of Mourning (Poems and Ballads, iii).
 The Lark Ascending.
 Phœbus with Admetus.
 Melampus.
 Love in the Valley.
 Juggling Jerry.
 Lucifer in Starlight.
 The Thrush in February.
 A Night of Frost in May.
 Tardy Spring.
- HARDY**: Time's Laughing Stocks.
 Late Lyrics.
- HOPKINS**: Poems.
- BRIDGES**: Shorter Poems.
 New Verse.
 The Testament of Beauty.
- HOUSMAN**: A Shropshire Lad.
 Last Poems.
 More Poems.
- KIPLING**: The Best of Kipling (ed. T. S. Eliot).
- YEATS**: Collected Poems.
- DOUGLAS** (LORD Alfred): Sonnets.
- DAVIES**: Collected Poems.
- DE LA MARE**: Collected Poems 1911-18.
 The Fleeting.
- THOMAS** (Edward): Collected Poems.
- ABERCROMBIE**: The Sale of St. Thomas.
- STEPHENS**: Poems.
 Collected Poems.
- FLECKER**: Collected Poems.
- BROOKE**: Collected Poems.
- SASSOON**: Collected Poems.
- PALMER**: Collected Poems.
 A Sword in the Desert.
- ELIOT**: The Waste Land.
 Four Quartets.
- LEWIS** (Alun): Raiders' Dawn.

LEWIS (Alun) (*continued*): Ha, Ha, Among the Trumpets!

KEYES (Sidney): Collected Poems.

Anthologies of Twentieth-century Verse:

Georgian Poetry (4 vols.) 1911-22.

Poems of To-Day (Series I, II, and III).

The Modern Muse.

Methuen's Anthology of Modern Verse.

Modern Poetry, 1922-34 (ed. Wollman).

Poems of Twenty Years, 1918-38 (ed. Wollman).

Modern Verse (ed. P. Jones), World's Classics.

Poems of Our Time, 1900-42 (ed. Church and Bozman).

The Golden Treasury of Modern Lyrics (ed. Binyon).

Poems of the War Years (1939-46) (ed. Wollman).

Twentieth Century Poetry (ed. H. Monro).

Introducing Modern Poetry (ed. W. C. Bebbington).

A Treasury of Modern Verse (ed. Collins).

NOVELS

MRS. GASKELL: North and South.

ELIOT (George): A novel; e.g. Adam Bede, or Romola, or Scenes from Clerical Life.

TROLLOPE: A novel; e.g. Barchester Towers, or The Last Chronicle of Barset, or The Warden.

STEVENSON: Weir of Hermiston.

HARDY: A novel; e.g. Far from the Madding Crowd, or The Trumpet-Major, or The Mayor of Casterbridge, or The Woodlanders.

MEREDITH: A novel; e.g. Evan Harrington, or The Ordeal of Richard Feverel, or The Egoist.

BUTLER: Erewhon.

Erewhon Revisited.

The Way of All Flesh.

BRONTË (Charlotte): Jane Eyre.

BRONTË (Emily): Wuthering Heights.

SHORTHOUSE (J. H.): John Inglesant.

JAMES (Henry): The Portrait of a Lady.

KIPLING: A book of short stories; e.g. Many Inventions, or Traffics and Discoveries, or Actions and Reactions.

CONRAD: A novel, e.g. Lord Jim, or Nostromo, or The Nigger of the Narcissus, or Typhoon.

WELLS: Tono-Bungay.

Tales of Space and Time.

GALSWORTHY: The Forsyte Saga.

A Modern Comedy.

MONTAGU (C. E.): Fiery Particles.

FORSTER (E. M.): A Room with a View.

Howard's End.

A Passage to India. Collected Short Stories.

WALPOLE: Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill.

The Herries Chronicle.

The Cathedral.

STEPHENS: The Crock of Gold.

MAUGHAM: Of Human Bondage.

WEBB: Precious Bane.

WOOLF (Virginia): To the Lighthouse.

Mrs. Dalloway.

MASSEFIELD (Katherine): The Garden Party.

SWIFT (D. H.): Sons and Lovers.

Collected Short Stories.

2. *A Group of Poets* may be studied together; e.g. Wordsworth, Coleridge, Shelley, Keats, and Byron, or, for the Elizabethans and the seventeenth century, *Elizabethan and Seventeenth Century Lyrics*, ed. Ault; *Drayton, Campion and Jonson*, ed. Beaumont; and *Metaphysical Poetry Donne to Butler*, ed. Grierson.

3. *A Series of Poets* may be taken to illustrate different epochs; e.g. Chaucer, Milton, and Pope.

4. *A Single Writer* may be studied by taking selections from different periods of his work; e.g. in the case of Shakespeare, 'King Henry IV' and 'A Winter's Tale' may be taken together, or 'The Two Gentlemen of Verona', 'Much Ado about Nothing', and 'The Tempest'.

It is better to avoid poems the proper study of which requires detailed historical notes; e.g. (if Pope is the writer selected) 'The Dunciad'.

5. Six or eight plays may be selected from such a list as the following to illustrate the growth and development of English Drama:

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| | The Sacrifice of Isaac (Chester Plays). |
| | Noah's Flood (Chester Plays.) |
| | Secunda Pastorum (Towneley Plays). |
| | (All in English Miracle Plays, ed. A. W. Pollard.) |
| | Everyman (with other medieval plays, Everyman edition). |
| KYD: | The Spanish Tragedy. |
| LYLY: | Campaspe. |
| MARLOWE: | Faustus. |
| | The Jew of Malta. |
| PÉELE: | The Arraignment of Paris. |
| GREENE: | Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay. |
| SHAKESPEARE: | Hamlet. |
| | King Lear. |
| | Coriolanus. |
| | A Winter's Tale. |
| JONSON: | Every Man in His Humour. |
| | The Silent Woman. |
| | The Alchemist. |
| | The Masque of Oberon. |
| DEKKER: | The Shoemaker's Holiday. |
| BEAUMONT, FLETCHER: | The Knight of the Burning Pestle. |
| FLETCHER, MASSINGER: | The Elder Brother. |
| MASSINGER: | A New Way to pay Old Debts. |
| WEBSTER: | The Duchess of Malfi. |
| FORD: | The Broken Heart. |
| MILTON: | Samson Agonistes. |
| DRYDEN: | All for Love. |

DRAMA

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| HARDY: | The Dynasts. |
| SHAW: | Candida. |
| | Arms and the Man. |
| | Man and Superman. |
| | The Doctor's Dilemma. |
| | You Never Can Tell. |

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| SYNGE: | The Shadow of the Glen. Riders to the Sea. The Playboy of the Western World. |
| WILDE: | The Importance of Being Earnest. |
| MASEFIELD: | The Tragedy of Nan. The Tragedy of Pompey the Great. |
| BOTTOMLEY: | King Lear's Wife. |
| MAUGHAM: | The Circle. |
| HOUSMAN (L.): | Victoria Regina. |
| GRANVILLE-BARKER: | Waste. The Madras House. The Voysey Inheritance. |
| SHERRIFF: | Journey's End. Badger's Green. |
| O'CASEY: | Juno and the Paycock. The Plough and the Stars. |
| BRIDIE: | Tobias and the Angel. |
| PRIESTLEY: | Dangerous Corner. Time and the Conways. Johnson over Jordan. |
| ELIOT: | Murder in the Cathedral. The Family Reunion. |
| AUDEN and ISHERWOOD: | The Dog Beneath the Skin. The Ascent of F6. |
| SPENDER: | Trial of a Judge. |

6. *Literary Criticism.* A similar study of development may be made from such works as the following:

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| SIDNEY: | The Defence of Poesy. |
| DRYDEN: | Critical Essays (ed. W. P. Ker). |
| POPE: | Essay on Criticism. Epistle to Dr. Arbuthnot. |
| JOHNSON: | Lives of the Poets. |
| WORDSWORTH: | Prefaces. |
| SHELLEY: | A Defence of Poetry. |
| COLERIDGE: | Biographia Literaria (chaps. iv, xiv-xxii). |
| HAZLITT: | Characters of Shakespear's Plays. The Spirit of the Age. |
| ARNOLD: | On Translating Homer. Essays in Criticism. |
| PATER: | Appreciations. |
| BRADLEY: | Shakespearean Tragedy. |
| SAINTSBURY: | History of English Prosody. History of English Criticism. |
| JAMES (Henry): | The Art of the Novel. |
| KER (W. P.): | Epic and Romance. |
| RALEIGH: | The English Novel. Shakespeare. Style. |
| BRIDGES: | Milton's Prosody. |
| ABERCROMBIE: | The Principles of Literary Criticism. Poetry, Its Music and Meaning. |
| 'Q': | On the Art of Writing. On the Art of Reading |

- GRANVILLE-BARKER: Prefaces to Shakespeare (Series i-iv).
 ELTON (Oliver): The English Muse.
 WOOLF (Virginia): The Common Reader (First and Second Series).
 FORSTER (E. M.): Aspects of the Novel.
 LUBBOCK (Percy): The Craft of Fiction.
 CECIL (LORD David): Early Victorian Novelists.
 RICHARDS (I. A.): Practical Criticism.
 ELIOT: Dante.
 Essays Ancient and Modern.
 The Use of Poetry and the Use of Criticism.
 LEWIS (C. Day): A Hope for Poetry.
 The Poetic Image.
 ENGLISH CRITICAL ESSAYS (XVIth-XVIIIth centuries). (World's Classics.)
 ENGLISH CRITICAL ESSAYS (XIXth century). (World's Classics.)
 ENGLISH CRITICAL ESSAYS (XXth century). (World's Classics.)

Incidentally a course of this kind may be illustrated by such poems as Drayton's 'Elegy to Henry Reynolds', Jonson's lines to the memory of Shakespeare, prefixed to the First Folio, Arnold's 'Memorial Verses' on Wordsworth, and Auden's *In Memory of W. B. Yeats*.

7. A few prose works are added that are specially suited for study at this stage.

- MORE (SIR T.): Utopia (Robynson's translation).
 HOOKER: Ecclesiastical Polity, Books I and II.
 BACON: Essays.
 The Advancement of Learning.
 DONNE: Sermons (Selection, ed. Pearsall Smith).
 MILTON: Prose (Selection, ed. Garnett).
 Arcopagitica.
 BROWNE (SIR T.): Religio Medici.
 CHARACTERS OF THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY (ed. D. Nichol Smith).
 BOSWELL and JOHNSON: Tour to the Hebrides (ed Chapman).
 BURKE: Select Works (ed. Payne).
 Reflections on the French Revolution.
 Letter to a Noble Lord.
 GIBBON: Autobiography.
 HAZLITT: Table-Talk.
 The Plain Speaker.
 Winterslow.
 COBBETT: The Progress of a Ploughboy to a Seat in Parliament (ed. Reitzel).
 Advice to Young Men and Women.
 The Idea of a University.
 Newman: Apologia Pro Vita Sua.
 Carlyle: Sartor Resartus.
 Past and Present.
 Ruskin: Modern Painters (Selection, ed. Finberg).
 Hopes and Fears for Art.
 Morris: The Renaissance.
 Pater: Life of Charlotte Brontë.
 Mrs. Gaskell: The Golden Bough (abridged edition 1922).
 Frazer: The Voyage of the Beagle.
 Darwin: Autobiography.
 Trollope: Travels in Arabia Deserta.
 Doughty:

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| GEORGE BOURNE | |
| (George Sturt): | Change in the Village. The Wheelwright's Shop. |
| TREVELYAN (G. M.): | English Social History. History of England. |
| MEYNELL (Alice): | Hearts of Controversy. The Second Person Singular. |
| MONTAGU (C. E.): | Disenchantment. |
| MASEFIELD: | Gallipoli. |
| STRACHEY: | Queen Victoria. |
| SASSOON: | Sherston's Journey. |

THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

Pamphlet No. 33

School Libraries

by

J. H. Fowler

November, 1915

Second Edition, January, 1928

SCHOOL LIBRARIES

THE school library can contribute a good deal towards some of the objects for which the English Association was founded. Its possibilities vary enormously with different local conditions. But some consideration of the aims that should be kept in view and of methods that have been found serviceable in particular cases may result in more use being made of the library than has always been made in the past. With this object the Publications Sub-Committee of the Association addressed a number of questions to the librarians of certain schools selected as representing various types, and this paper is based in great part upon the answers received.

It is perhaps not wholly superfluous to emphasize at the outset the absolute necessity for every self-respecting school of a good library. Some persons not yet old can remember the days when, in response to the new demand for the teaching of natural science, it was thought sufficient to read a chemistry text-book in class. To attempt the study of language and literature and history without books of reference is just as absurd as to attempt the study of natural science without experiment. Governing bodies of schools now everywhere recognize the necessity of providing a laboratory; they ought equally to recognize the obligation to provide a library.

I. WHAT SHOULD BE THE AIM OF THE SCHOOL LIBRARY?

The following are the main objects to be kept in view:

- (a) To encourage a habit of reading and research;
- (b) To encourage a taste for the best books;
- (c) To provide books of reference for all and authorities for specialists.

Rules will vary with special circumstances; but in all rules the essential thing is to keep these objects steadily in view. *Accessibility*

to all who wish to make legitimate use of the library—this is the first condition. The temptation of the librarian, almost in proportion as he strives after perfection, is to hedge about his library with restrictions that make it less accessible.

(a) As to methods by which the habit of reading can be encouraged. The Winchester rules define the library as ‘a place of quiet reading for masters and boys’. The Rugby librarian mentions as a subsidiary aim that the library is to be ‘a resource on wet days and Sunday afternoons’. How is the library to be made attractive to others besides the few who are naturally drawn to quiet study and a chance of reading the best books? At Rugby ‘we combine the main school library with a reading room and on the floor above it is an art gallery. Illustrated papers, school magazines, daily papers, comfortable chairs, and bright environment, attract younger boys, who (we hope) gradually form a library habit’. Similarly the librarian of St. Felix School, Southwold, reports: ‘We find the library most attractive. It is a beautiful room, and the elder girls often do their preparation there, and take down books for reference and reading from the shelves at will. It is open all day long.’

The difficulty is to combine the lure of attractiveness with attention to (b), an encouragement of taste for the best. There is room, for instance, for a difference of opinion as to whether it is a good plan to have newspapers and school magazines and current fiction in the library proper. One plan, followed at some boarding-schools, is to put fiction and the lighter periodicals in house libraries, and to adopt a somewhat severe standard for the school library. At Clifton something has been done to reveal the attractions of the library to many who would not discover them for themselves by a series of small exhibitions. At one time the history of printing from the fifteenth to the twentieth century has been illustrated by a display of books arranged chronologically on several tables; at another time the history of engraving and the art of book-illustration; at another time the history of painting. It is proposed to hold similar exhibitions each term: historical portraits, architecture, coins, the world in pictures, will furnish subjects for future displays. The value of such exhibitions is much increased if teachers, after studying them a little for themselves, take sets of pupils round and give them explanations on points of interest.

Pupils (and masters) often complain that they have ‘no time’ to go to the library. Under modern conditions the school-day is filled

so full of engagements that the difficulty of finding time is a genuine one. School authorities should not forget that training in the use of a library is not the least essential part of a good education. Nor should teachers forget the value of a good example. There ought to be no doubt in the pupils' minds that the master cares for books for their own sake, and is not afraid of taking trouble to clear up a doubtful point by research.

Pictures add much to the attractiveness of the library; and if these are not left to accumulate at haphazard, but collected on some definite plan, they may have great educational value. Mention may be made of the Medici Society's reproductions and the earlier Arundel engravings. The device of frames with removable backs, admitting of a change of engravings from time to time, is useful. So also is a case in which special treasures may be exhibited; and such an exhibition is very likely of itself to draw interesting gifts to a school library. Clifton boys can see in this way two Greek letters on papyrus belonging to the first and second centuries, two letters of Addison to the young Earl of Warwick, an early copy of 'The Spectator', a letter of Nelson, a manuscript of Newbolt, some early printed books, first editions of 'The Advancement of Learning' and 'Poems by Two Brothers'.

At small expense useful and interesting collections of pictures can be made to illustrate lessons in the classics, modern literature, history, architecture, geography, and other subjects. For these purposes post cards need not be disdained, and illustrations from periodicals can be mounted on card. But to be of any use such collections must be carefully classified.

It should be one of the aims of all teachers 'to encourage habits of reading and research'; and there is no subject in which the assistance of the library cannot be invoked. Thus the teacher of history may set historical problems that require the use of library books for their solution; the teacher of literature can set literary questions that involve research and comparison; the teacher of English composition can choose subjects for which the material is to be found in the library. Some hints should generally be given as to the directions in which research may profitably be made; and subjects should preferably be chosen for which the material will not directly be found in any one authority. Form-masters and mistresses can also do much to encourage the use of the school library by taking their classes there from time to time, showing them

how to use the catalogue and how to find books, and calling their attention to useful and attractive books in various subjects.

(b) *The encouragement of a taste for the best books.* The library can only be a silent educator, but it can none the less be a very valuable one. If we take pains to get the very best books on each subject, those who use the library are not likely to be content with inferior books for themselves. And in literature our ideal should be that the presence of a book in the library may be a guarantee of its high quality, while the absence of a book may at least suggest the presumption that it is not an accepted classic.

(c) *The provision of books of reference for all and authorities for specialists.* This object cannot successfully be attained without the co-operation of the specialists on the school staff. They should be asked to suggest additions that they consider desirable, whilst bearing in mind the limits fixed by available funds and space and the claims of competing subjects. In providing books for the specialist the library committee will necessarily be driven to a working compromise between two extremes. For specialist masters the library performs the highest service if it purchases publications too expensive and elaborate to be often bought by individuals (e.g. the Transactions and Proceedings of the Royal Society, the Rolls Series, the publications of the Hellenic Society, Egypt and Palestine Exploration Funds, Archaeological and Palaeographical Societies, Modern Language Review, Modern Philology, Classical Quarterly, Burlington Magazine, &c.). Further, to support the societies and publishers that produce learned works is in itself to perform a service to national education, and one that the school librarian ought not to lose sight of. On the other hand, a library that is loaded with learned works is naturally repellent to the ordinary boy and girl. Something may be done by astuteness of arrangement to meet this last difficulty: attractive books should, as far as is practicable, be placed in the foreground; specialist treatises may be stored in the background, because the specialist will certainly find what he wants if it is provided for him. But in the choice of books it will be well, for the sake of young readers, not to avoid the more popular and elementary works, provided always that nothing is included which is not of good quality.

Most pupils understand the usefulness of the 'Encyclopaedia Britannica'. Some use it well, but not wisely. It will be a good thing to encourage the use of other books of reference, e.g. the

Dictionary of National Biography, the Oxford English Dictionary, the Dialect Dictionary, the larger Bible Dictionaries and Dictionaries of Antiquities, the Companion to English History, Dr. Brewer's Dictionaries, Nares' Shakespeare Glossary, Atlases, Gazetteers, Concordances to the Bible and Shakespeare, the Statesman's Year Book, University Calendars. Teachers can help a good deal by setting papers of the 'General Knowledge' type, and encouraging the use of the library in the search for answers.

II. HOW IS THE LIBRARY KEPT UP TO DATE? HAVE YOU ANY PLAN FOR 'WEEDING OUT'?

1. 'An attempt is made to purchase all books necessary in different departments to meet the needs of boys at school. (We do not buy *mere* school books or any novels which are not "classical".) At intervals space is gained by clearing out duplicates or books which are out of date' (*Winchester College*).

2. 'When more room is required we banish out-of-date books to a cellar where they are still accessible with the help of a custodian. A sale of some old books is now contemplated' (*Rugby School*).

3. '*The Times Literary Supplement* is taken by the librarian, and during the first fortnight of term suggestions of new books may be given in by the heads of each department, any other member of the staff, or sixth form. From this a list of books is made and bought' (*St. Leonard's School, St. Andrews*).

4. 'New books are bought each term, but they are not necessarily the latest. We aim at getting the *best*' (*Chellenham Ladies' College*).

5. A book for suggestions should be kept in the library, and its use encouraged. No doubt suggestions will often be made that cannot be acted upon, but it should be possible to make those who contribute suggestions feel that their ideas have received consideration.

6. The co-operation of specialist members of the staff is, as has already been said, essential. The Clifton plan is to have small sub-committees in the following departments: Theology, Classics, Foreign Languages, History and Biography, Economics and Education, Geography, Chemistry and Physics, Natural History, Music and the Fine Arts. The sub-committees are asked not merely to suggest additions, but from time to time to go through the shelves and prepare lists of books that may be removed to class-rooms or banished altogether. Systematic provision for 'weeding out' is important and has not hitherto received the attention it deserves.

7. '*Libri Desiderati*.' A custom obtains at some schools that pupils on leaving contribute a book to the school library. Admirable as this practice is, it has one drawback; if the donors have unchecked choice the library is sure to receive many books that it does not particularly want. This disadvantage may be avoided if the librarian publishes periodically, in the school magazine or elsewhere, a list of desirable books.

III. THE MANAGEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

1. A school library on an adequate scale requires the services of a librarian who is prepared to give it a considerable proportion of his time. It is usual to appoint one of the staff to the office, and, in the case of the larger libraries, to give him an assistant.

2. It is probable that hitherto the usefulness of a school library has depended, more than on any other factor, upon the happy chance or the judgement of the head master, which has given it a good librarian. No doubt the good librarian is 'born, not made'. Yet if he has no training for work, which is after all skilled labour requiring an expert, he can only be an amateur to start with, and he is liable to be called away to other tasks before he has even learnt his job. Some training on the plan of the post-school course supplied by Cheltenham Ladies' College seems desirable.

This course comprises lectures (with practical work) on Cataloguing, Library Routine, Classification, Library History and Equipment, and the Elements of Bibliography. Under this last head are included 'history of printing, methods of book-illustration and book-production, history of bookbinding, and practical bibliography, i.e. collation and description of books, compilation of bibliographies, study of books of reference, and book selection'. 'During her year of training each student must (1) make a catalogue for herself of fifty volumes (*a*) in dictionary catalogue form and (*b*) in classified catalogue form (by Dewey), (2) make a bibliography of some subject chosen by herself (not limited to books in the college library).'

In default of the opportunity for training, an intelligent man or woman can find means for acquiring the knowledge by reading and observation. But the point is that the librarian and the school authorities should recognize that expert knowledge, however obtained, is essential. An ignorant librarian is an incompetent one.

3. At some schools (e.g. Rugby, Clifton, Manchester High School

for Girls) there is a library committee which meets at least two or three times a year. At Clifton the committee consists of the head master, nine or ten masters, seven of the sixth form. At some schools the committee merely selects books. Probably this function is better performed by the librarian with the assistance of specialist sub-committees. When books are voted for by a general committee, it too often happens that the more expensive (which are also in many cases the most necessary) books in special subjects are rejected by the general vote, while the cheaper books (which by the 'Libri Desiderati' system can be procured without any vote at all) are readily assented to. On the other hand, it is desirable that the committee should have a real voice in the management. It is only through such a committee that the librarian can be kept in close touch with the needs and wishes of the staff and school whose servant he is.

4. For every reason—for the sake of themselves, the library, and the school—the help of the sixth form should be enlisted in management. At Clifton seven of the sixth, of whom the head of the school is generally one, attend the library for an hour a week each; they are also members of committee.

IV. FINANCE

'Two shillings a boy is paid yearly by every Commoner. £25 a year is voted by the College' (*Winchester College*).

'Every' boy is charged a small fee every term, and masters and a few resident subscribers contribute 7s. 6d. per year' (*Rugby School*).

'The Governors have given a yearly grant since the foundation of the school in 1874, generally £20 for the Senior and £5 for the Junior Library per annum' (*Manchester High School for Girls*).

'The School Council gives every term a grant of one shilling per head for every girl in school. Girls on leaving give a subscription or book. No fiction is bought (only presented). About £12 to £15 a term is spent on books at the librarian's discretion. The school defrays furnishing, &c., expenses of the library' (*St. Leonard's School, St. Andrews*).

At Clifton College the parents of new boys are invited by circular to promise a regular subscription to the library: these subscriptions

vary from 2s. 6d. to 10s. a term. A fresh circular is sent out when boys reach the fifth form, and parents are asked to encourage their sons to use the library. The sixth form give a voluntary subscription towards the cost of periodicals, and many books (generally from the published list of 'Libri Desiderati') are given by boys on leaving the school and by old Cliftonians. Three former masters are commemorated by endowment funds of £100 and upwards, the interest of which is applied to the purchase of books in specified subjects. The yearly income is substantially increased by the interest on an invested surplus and by the sale of magazines. The librarian submits an audited statement of accounts and an estimate of expenditure for the current year to the committee at its March meeting.

V. CATALOGUING AND ARRANGEMENT

There is no necessity for the elaborate system in use in modern public libraries. What is wanted is a system by which even a stupid boy or girl can find the desired book without much difficulty.

Wherever it is possible, the books themselves should be arranged according to subjects. A simple classification is:—Divinity, English Literature, Latin, Greek, Classical Criticism, French, German, Italian, Philosophy and Economics, Art, Chemistry, Physics, Natural History, Geology, Geography and Travels, Biography, History, Books of Reference.

The catalogue should be primarily an authors' catalogue. A card catalogue is much better than a book catalogue, as each new book can be inserted without much trouble in its right place. The card should bear on its face in easily legible characters the particulars necessary for prompt identification of the book—author, title, No. of vols., edition, size, place of origin, date: in the top left-hand corner, No. of press and shelf.

Example:

| | |
|------|---|
| A 18 | MORRIS (William) |
| | The Story of Sigurd the Volsung and the |
| | Fall of the Niblungs |
| | 2nd edition |
| | 8vo. London, 1877. |

If the title is very long it may be abbreviated. The principle that the object of the card is to help the reader to find what he wants as quickly as possible should take precedence of all rules devised by bibliographers.

Either on cards or in a book there should be a *shelf-catalogue* for the librarian's use. In this the books should be entered very briefly, a single line being given to each entry.

Example:

| | Vols. |
|--------------------------------|-------|
| Jusserand, Literary History . | 3 |
| Bradley, Shakespearean Tragedy | 1 |
| „ Lectures on Poetry . | 1 |

If the shelf-catalogue is carefully kept up to date, there is no need to number the individual volumes in the library: the absence of a volume can quickly be detected by comparing the shelf-catalogue with the shelf.

If it is not found possible to prepare a complete *subjects' catalogue* in addition to the *authors' catalogue* for general use (and if the library is itself arranged according to subjects this is hardly necessary) a good plan is to insert in the general alphabetical catalogue a limited number of subjects, especially in cases where a student who did not know the name of the authorities on the subject he was investigating might have some difficulty in finding the right book. In such cases the full details already entered on the author's card need not be furnished again.

Librarians and others will find the admirable Subjects' Catalogue of the London Library very helpful. A copy of the Publishers' Catalogue is also useful for reference. This is an expensive work to purchase and also soon goes out of date; but as all large book-sellers require a copy of the current edition, it may be possible to acquire a fairly recent edition cheaply.

VI. LIBRARY REGULATIONS

1. The principle of *accessibility* has already been insisted on: it must govern all the regulations that are made. Thus, if the users of the library can be taught to enter their own borrowings and returnings in a book kept for the purpose on the librarian's table,

this is obviously better than the plan of allowing no books to be taken away except during the librarian's hours of attendance. To prevent the confusion caused if books get into wrong shelves, it is well to make a rule that they shall only be replaced by the librarian or a qualified assistant.

2. Most school libraries combine the functions of a reference library and a lending library. The Winchester regulations forbid the removal of books from the boys' library during the day: they may be taken out in the evening by being entered in a book, but must be returned the next morning: books not in special demand may be taken out for longer periods on application to the librarian. At Clifton books may be taken out at any time by the staff and sixth and fifth forms, and a few other boys who have obtained special permission; books (up to a limit of three volumes) may be kept for four weeks by a master or one week by a boy, but can be renewed by the simple process of making a fresh entry; the privilege of renewal is subject to the condition that no fresh application has been made for the volume in a register provided for the purpose; and all books are called in at the end of term.

3. Dictionaries and other reference books should not be removed from the library. It is well to make this clear by a label attached externally to such books. A similar regulation is commonly made about current magazines and about all new books during the term in which they have been added to the library.

4. The question, '*How do you prevent the loss of books without vexatiously restricting borrowers?*' elicited an interesting variety of answers, which ranged from the cheerful admission of one public school—'Usually quite forty to fifty books are missing at the end of the term: about 80 per cent. of these drift back in the course of two years: net loss about £7 worth of books a year'—to the Draconian method announced by a lady librarian—'When a volume is missed, the library is locked till the book reappears'. The last plan is open to the objection that it may seriously restrict the usefulness of the library. Moreover, if the offender should prove to be a member of the staff, as may conceivably be the case, it is unfair to penalize the pupils, unless Horace's '*Quidquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi*' is to be accepted as a principle for imitation. No one has discovered an infallible prescription for making the loss of books impossible, but experience seems to show that if the librarian exercises vigilance the losses will not be numerous. Losses are far more often due to

carelessness than to wilful dishonesty, and carelessness on the part of borrowers can generally be kept in check by care on the part of the librarian. Losses should be detected as promptly as possible by overhauling the shelves continually on a systematic plan with the shelf-catalogue.

VII. THE CHOICE OF BOOKS

This has already been considered to some extent in Sections I and II, but it may be useful to suggest a few principles for guidance, especially with regard to English studies.

1. In English literature the first aim should be to supply the library with the best available editions of all standard authors, securing first those who ought to be read, in whole or in part, at school. By 'best editions' are to be understood those of which the text is most accurate and complete, but excellence of printing, paper, and binding is certainly not to be left out of account. Standard collections of poems and prose specimens should be added, e.g. *The Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics*, *The Oxford Book of English Verse*, Child's collection of Ballads, Ward's *English Poets*, Craik's *English Prose Specimens*, Chambers's *Cyclopaedia of English Literature*.¹

2. The library should contain all standard biographies of the great authors (including a set of *English Men of Letters*); also famous diaries and collections of letters.

3. It should contain one or more good histories of English literature—of the whole and of each period; the standard works of literary criticism, grammars, dictionaries, a good prosody, some good works on the history of the language.

4. The purchase of editions valuable because of their rarity is hardly a suitable application of the funds of a school library. On the other hand, a librarian should certainly welcome gifts of rare editions, as they may be very helpful in stimulating an interest in books.

5. The desirability of keeping the standard high may be emphasized once more in conclusion. We do not want our pupils to be

¹ Since this pamphlet was first issued, the Association has afforded school librarians some valuable guidance in 'A Reference Library: English Language and Literature' (Pamphlet No. 46, revised and reissued in 1927 as No. 66). See also Nos. 21, 23, 29, 61.

content with inaccurate and superficial information, and it should not be given them in the school library. In nine cases out of ten the book which is to be rejected on the ground of superficiality is equally to be rejected on the score of style. It may be worth while to enter a word of special caution against some of the expensive sets of encyclopaedic works industriously pressed by travellers upon head masters and librarians.

POSTSCRIPT (January 1928)

Advantage has been taken of the opportunity afforded by a reprint to make a few small improvements. It would not be possible to bring all the information up to date without circularizing the schools again and rewriting the whole pamphlet. In spite of the War, the last thirteen years have seen progress, and far more schools have well-equipped libraries. But the continuous demand for this pamphlet seems to show that it has not exhausted its usefulness. The excellent Board of Education Memorandum, 1928, supplements without superseding it, and the same may be said of the Departmental Report on the Teaching of English, 1921.

On p. 5 I have reluctantly deleted a reference to the Art for Schools Association, which has ceased its beneficent activities from lack of support. On p. 9 the account of the Clifton method of financing the library is no longer accurate, the voluntary subscription having been superseded by a fixed levy which is included in the regular school fees. Cheltenham (Boys') College has now a whole-time librarian, who ranks as a regular master. Few schools can afford this expense, but it will be increasingly recognized that a good library requires a large proportion of the time and thought of an expert member of the school staff.

J. H. F.

THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

Pamphlet No. 56

The
Problem of Grammar

July, 1923

Reprinted July, 1930

THE PROBLEM OF GRAMMAR

INTRODUCTION

THE Departmental Committee on the Teaching of English devoted certain pages of their Report to 'The Problem of Grammar', and the present pamphlet, which has adopted the same title, will be found to be in some measure a development and discussion of those pages. The findings in this section of the English Report have, apparently, excited considerable discussion and some disappointment among teachers. The discussion was to be expected; a pronouncement upon the vexed question of grammar would have attracted attention in any event. The disappointment was also not surprising; it was, no doubt, hoped that the Committee would do something to 'settle the question'; instead, they seemed to raise new issues and so, in the eyes of the harassed teacher, to render confusion worse confounded. In point of fact the Committee made no effort to decide the question out of hand, and, if their diagnosis of the present situation be sound, such an effort would have been futile had they made it. What they tried to do was to get down to first principles, and to clear the air of certain fallacies which had darkened counsel in the past. Thus, after remarking upon the conflicting nature of the evidence submitted to them, they wrote: 'When a subject is thus hotly debated, and when it is difficult to discover a general consensus of opinion among practitioners upon any aspect of the matter, it is legitimate to suspect that the problem has hitherto not been sufficiently analysed or envisaged, and that the confusion of tongues arises from confusion of thought. Under such circumstances, we believe that the most useful thing we can do in this Report is to make some attempt to set the problem in its proper proportions.' If then we take the Committee at their word, we must attach importance not so much to the actual recommendations which they make upon the teaching of grammar as to the way in which they regard the problem as a whole. From this point of view the considerations which appear to have weighed most with them are:—

(i) that English grammar, as taught in school, has hitherto been modelled far too closely on the lines of Latin grammar; in other words, that a grammatical system based upon the structure of a dead synthetic language is ill-adapted to the needs of a living language which is largely analytical in character.

(ii) that modern English, having been neglected by philologists until quite recently, the laws of its structure are only now being worked

out, and English grammar is, therefore, a difficult, not to say a dangerous, subject to handle in the class-room.

(iii) that, nevertheless, some introduction to the study of language is necessary in most schools, and that for this purpose 'pure or functional grammar' rather than modern English grammar is the proper instrument.

To the practical teacher, perhaps, these theses, however interesting, do not seem particularly helpful. They cast down his old gods and set up in their stead an unknown deity called 'pure grammar', the nature of which the English Report makes little attempt to explain. Evidently the Committee's main purpose was to provoke discussion, and to guide discussion on to what they considered right lines. They felt that it was as yet too early to prescribe for the class-room.

It seemed to the Executive Committee of the English Association that here was a situation in which something useful might be done. If discussion was the need, the English Association existed to promote discussion upon matters of moment to teachers of English. If, as the English Report declared, linguistic students were discovering new facts about the English language, some representative philologist might be invited to inform the Association what the position was at the present time. If 'pure grammar' was the road to grammatical salvation in the schools, it was highly desirable to make quite sure what the expression 'pure grammar' implied. Accordingly the first annual conference after the publication of the English Report was devoted to 'The Problem of Grammar'. At this conference, which was held at Bedford College, 27th May 1922, the Association was fortunate in securing, as the principal speakers, Professor Allen Mawer of Liverpool University, one of the most distinguished of living English linguistic scholars, and Mr. S. O. Andrew, head-master of the Whitgift Grammar School and member of the Prime Minister's Committee on the teaching of the Classics, who had long been known to entertain views on the subject of 'pure grammar'. Their papers, together with an account, necessarily highly condensed, of the interesting discussion that followed, form the substance of the present pamphlet.

But before proceeding to report the conference itself, it is necessary to speak of two events which have taken place in the interim. One is the publication, in vol. viii of *Essays and Studies* of a paper entitled 'English Grammar and Grammars' by Dr. R. B. McKerrow. As this valuable contribution to the controversy is available to all members of the Association, and must be familiar to most of those who will read this pamphlet, it is needless to say more about it here.

terminology. Representatives of both schools of grammatical thought found a place on this sub-committee, which after a number of meetings and considerable discussion drew up an agreed document. This document, in the somewhat abridged form in which it was finally adopted by the Executive Committee, runs as follows:—

A note by the English Association upon 'The Report of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology (1911)'.

The English Association has on a former occasion expressed its sympathy with the attempt of the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology to secure consistency in the use of grammatical terms in English schools. But it recognizes that the researches of philologists during recent years have emphasized certain characteristics of English which distinguish it from the other languages dealt with in the Joint Committee's Report, and that, in particular, difficulties have arisen with regard to the notions of case, mood, modality, time and tense. It desires, therefore, to explain that its assent to the recommendations of the Report has been given with reservations, and to express its belief that teachers who keep abreast of modern linguistic and grammatical research will be careful not to prejudice investigation by using in their English lessons any term borrowed from the conditions of other languages unless it can be justified by the occurrence of similar conditions in our own. They may well ease the burden of those pupils who will shortly begin the study of other languages by anticipating, in the way of special treatment, the related grammatical conceptions of those languages. But it is one thing to make use in teaching grammar of the numerous points of actual resemblance between English and the four foreign languages dealt with in the Report: it is quite another to invent resemblances which have in fact no existence. It has been thought desirable to make this explanation of the Association's attitude. But it is to be noted that a considerable portion of the pamphlet, in particular those sections which deal with the logical basis of language, is, speaking generally, not open to question.

The foregoing 'note' represents a compromise, of course, and compromise is seldom an occasion for enthusiasm with either of the interested parties. It was, however, a source of much satisfaction, to the chairman of the sub-committee if to no one else, to find that an agreed statement of some kind was possible. The deliberations of the sub-committee were most amicable; yet the production of this short paragraph, almost every sentence of which was a battle-field, has delayed the publication of the present pamphlet for a twelve-month.

July, 1923.

J. D. W.

THE PROBLEM OF GRAMMAR IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN LINGUISTIC THOUGHT

BY PROFESSOR ALLEN MAWER

IN the recent report of the English Committee one of the most refreshing features was the frank recognition there given to the great changes which are even now taking place in our grammatical conceptions as the result of the study of modern languages, and more especially of English, by many distinguished scholars, of whom Jespersen is the most prominent.

As a basis for to-day's discussion upon Grammar I should like to develop, a little more fully than the limits of the Report allowed, some of the lines upon which those changes have taken place, and there is the more reason for so doing as unfortunately only too little is known of the matter in England, largely because from the linguistic point of view the material is somewhat inaccessible.

The root of the whole matter lies undoubtedly in the realization by modern students of language of the vast and essential differences of grammatical structure between the languages of Modern Europe on the one hand and those of the Ancient World on the other. The process of passage from highly inflected to less inflected or uninflected forms of speech has necessitated the development of entirely new methods of expressing the relation of words and ideas to one another, and, let me hasten to add, has not been merely a process of simplification, and certainly has not been one of corruption or degeneration. The analytic structure of many modern languages has given opportunities for expressing in language shades of thought, feeling, and idea which are not found or only imperfectly expressed in synthetic languages of more rigid structure. The process is, moreover, not by any means confined to English. She may have carried it furthest, with Danish as a good second, but German is advancing in the same direction and no European language is unaffected by it.

As a necessary corollary to this change of structure comes a shifting of the emphasis in grammatical study. Morphology and accidence play less and less part in grammars of modern speech, while syntax is becoming all important. It is symptomatic of the new trend of thought in this matter that when Jespersen had completed the section on Phonology in his *Grammar of Modern English* he proceeded immediately to tackle the problems of syntax.

Further, let us note that when we pass from the study of a dead

language to a living one there is bound to be a slight change in our conception of the function of grammar. The grammar of a language whose canon is, so to speak, complete, must tend to be a statement of rules, a scheme of government, for it is based upon usages which cannot in the nature of things be capable of change. The grammar of a living language must, on the other hand, be a 'live' if ordered record of language as we hear it read and spoken every day. Such language cannot in the very nature of things remain entirely fixed and unchanged, and the function of grammar must in this case be to recognize rather than retard the inevitable processes of linguistic development.

So much for the general ideas underlying modern conceptions of grammar, let us now illustrate in some detail a few of the points in which the new method of approach has disturbed long-accepted grammatical traditions.

Let us look first at one of the fundamental distinctions of grammar, viz. the grouping of the parts of speech, and let us take in particular the common definitions of noun and adjective. 'A noun is the name of a person or thing.' 'An adjective is a word that is used with a noun, to describe or indicate or enumerate what is denoted by the noun.' These definitions are not very helpful when in French we are called upon to distinguish noun and adjective in such expressions as *un philosophe grec*, *un savant aveugle*, or to decide whether in *un peuple ami*, or *une nation amie* we have two nouns or an adjective and a noun. The distinction is clearer in English and German partly through the fixed position of the adjective, partly because in German noun and adjective are in part at least inflected differently and partly because, as in English, the adjective ceased to be inflected while the noun remained so. When Shakespeare speaks of 'Normans, but bastard Normans, Norman bastards', it is not so much our definition of noun and adjective as the accidental difference of inflexion which enables us to determine which is which.

The real distinction between noun and adjective is clear when we observe with Jespersen in his *Sprogets Logik* that the noun always denotes something more specialized than the adjective, e. g. Napoleon the third, a new book, the sad history, a beautiful afternoon, a blue stone. Between the most highly specialized type of noun, viz. proper nouns and the most general type of adjective, viz. the article, there are of course an infinite number of degrees of specialization. Note here that this definition is not invalidated by the existence of such forms of expression as 'Bradford woollens', for 'Bradford' here means 'manufactured in Bradford' and can be applied to many other things

besides woollens. Note too how it solves the problem as to which is noun and which is adjective in *les philosophes grecs*—for philosophers are unfortunately much less common than Greeks, so the specialized *philosophes* is a noun, while the more common *grecs* is an adjective. Such a phrase as *les grecs philosophes* or *denkende Griechen* in place of the familiar *griechische Denker* is unnatural, because it presupposes that there are more thinkers than there are Greeks.

In further illustration, note Galsworthy's 'After having been a Conservative Liberal it was first in Disraeli's time that he became a Liberal Conservative'. Conservative and Liberal as descriptive of types of mind are of much wider application than the actual name of the parties, hence the distinction of noun and adjective in the two phrases. Or, secondly, the way in which the use of an adjective as a noun may make a phrase much more pointed than when the adjective is used as such. *Vous êtes un impertinent* is much more effective than *Vous êtes impertinent*; on the other hand, when a noun is used as an adjective the adjective is as a rule of much wider application than the noun, as in the French nouns *rose*, *mauve*, *puce*, when used as adjectives of colour. Finally, it is this different degree of specialization which accounts for the fact that adjectives can be compared while nouns cannot.

Closely allied to this fresh analysis of the function of noun and adjective is Jespersen's ranging of words in a sentence according to their rank as Primary, Secondary, or Tertiary, or better as principal, adjunct, and subjunct. One word (the primary or principal) is defined or modified by a second (the secondary or adjunct), and that again by a third (the tertiary or subjunct).

There may be further sub-modifications for words of quaternary or quinary rank, but we need not specify them by any particular name as no language has developed any particular form to express them. Thus in 'Extraordinary warm weather', *weather* is principal, *warm* is adjunct, and *extraordinary* is subjunct. In 'A certainly not very well-established conjecture', though *certainly* is a quinary or even a sexenary word, it does not differ from a tertiary in form.

The function of the adjunct is to specialize, to particularize the principal; of the subjunct to do the same thing for the adjunct: and note here that this is not a contradiction of, or inconsistent with, what was said above about the noun being more specialized than the adjective, for the word or phrase which is to be specialized by the help of another word is always more special than the specializing word. Note the increasing series of specializations in *very*, *poor*, *very poor*, *widow*, *poor widow*, *very poor widow*. Note specially the

function of *the*, the most general and least specialized of all adjuncts in 'Give me *the* book'.

There is, of course, some degree of correspondence between these orders of subordination and the three parts of speech, noun, adjective, and adverb; we might even define nouns as words habitually standing as principals, &c., but the correspondence is not complete. The distinction between principal, adjunct, and subjunct is a logical one and applies to all languages; that between noun, adjective, and adverb is a grammatical one and can only easily be maintained where the classes are kept apart by inflexions. It breaks down in a language like Finnish where there is no distinction of form between noun and adjective, where you still do only have 'nouns' in the old sense. In English, as we saw above, inflexion has done something to keep them apart, but note that *poor* in '*poor* people' is identical in form with *poor* in 'the *poor*', though it is adjunct in one case and principal in the other, and *butcher's* in 'the *butcher's* shop' is a noun in form but an adjunct in function. The formal difference between adjectives and adverbs in English is very slight and from the point of view of the old categories we may dispute endlessly as to whether *then* in 'the *then* government' and *here* in 'this man *here*' is adjective or adverb, but from the new point of view it is clear that *then* and *here* are both alike adjuncts rather than subjuncts. The distinction between different parts of speech depends on formal criteria. As languages develop, those formal criteria are often obliterated, and it would seem well that we should have some less ambiguous and artificial grouping of our words.

Jespersen shows how misleading is some of the current grammatical terminology when he refers to the N.E.D. treatment of *there* (sense 1), It is called a substantive not only in 'There is no "here" nor "there"', where it is a quotation substantive, and 'Motion requires a here and there', where it has become a real substantive, as also in 'In the space-field lie innumerable other theres', but it is also called a substantive in 'over against there', 'from there', and 'he left there last night', in which cases *there* retains its proper adverbial force and signification though used as a principal (obj. of a prep. or a verb). If we call *there* a noun, to be consistent we should have to call '*behind the old oak*' in 'from behind the old oak' a substantive, and '*between 2 and 3,000*' in 'he left between 2 and 3,000' a substantive also. Really they are group-principals. In parts of speech the part of speech must follow the use—they are not merely 'used as' such.

Another field of grammar in which we are realizing the need for new categories, new grouping of ideas is that of time and tense. In his paper *Tid og Tempus*, published in 1914, Jespersen shows how

many and great misunderstandings have arisen from our failure to distinguish the real category of *tid* or time from the grammatical category of *tempus* or *tense*. Fundamental confusion has arisen in the matter from the unfortunate fact that in certain languages, and English is one of them, the terms 'present', 'past', and 'future' have come to be used of two entirely different things—time and tense. The truth is that a form which is present in 'tense' may be used of present, past, or future in 'time'. 'I travel' in 'I travel to Moscow' may in narrative refer to past times. In 'I travel to-day' it refers to present time, and in 'I travel to-morrow' refers to future time, and yet in all these we have only one tense, viz. the present, and our grammatical thought will remain confused until this is recognized in our grammatical nomenclature, and perhaps the best thing would be to keep the terms, present, past, and future for use of 'time' only, and to use *praesens*, *praeteritum*, and *futurum*, or some such terms for 'tense'.

The *praesens* tense is not limited to expressing what is present in time, that which is happening at the present moment; it is also used of what is true at all times, e.g. 'the earth turns on its axis', of the future as in 'I travel to-morrow', and that which is past in time as in the historic present. And here let us note that the last usage is by no means a purely literary idiom, you can hear it every day in the streets in that characteristic Englishman's, or still better, Englishwoman's 'I says to him', an idiom which led to the Chinese nickname for an English Tommy, 'Sez I'.

The future in time has in some languages a distinctive *futurum* tense or series of tenses, but in English, while we can express the future in many ways, not one of them is really a future in tense. Note the alternatives, (1) I *shall* sail, (2) he *will* sail, (3) I am *going* to sail, (4) we hope we *may* sail, (5) I wish that you *may come to be* ashamed. Not one of them is future in form.

Tense forms can on the other hand be used to express ideas that have nothing to do with the time with which they were once associated. In 'Would he were here!' the *praeteritum* expresses a wish for the present. Similarly in 'If I were rich, I would pay you' we use the forms of the *praeteritum*, but in time the sentence refers only to the present. The *antepraeteritum* form also can be used of the present time. 'If I had had the money I would have paid you.' A *praeteritum* form can be even used of the future time. 'It is high time he was punished.' In 'Could'nt you lend' or 'Could'nt you have lent me sixpence?' the *praeteritum* tense-form is used but the reference in time is to the present.

When we pass from *praesens*, *praeteritum*, and *futurum* to *perfectum* we still see the necessity of distinguishing form from meaning. The old process whereby perfects became presents is still going on, and in 'I've got no time to do it' and 'You've got to do it' perfect tense forms are used to express pure presents in time.

Note also the necessity of recognizing that the perfect tense can refer to both present and past time in English in the case of the passive, according as the emphasis so to speak is on the auxiliary or on the participle. There is all the difference in the world between the time of *are paid* in 'His bills *are paid* regularly on the first of every month' and 'His bills *are paid*, so he owes nothing now', and there is a very definite difference of meaning between *was shut* in the two halves of the following sentence—'When I came at five the door *was shut*, but I do not know when it *was shut*'—one is present in time and the other past, though both have the same tense-form.

If we are not to involve ourselves in hopeless contradictions and difficulties we need to think out afresh for ourselves the whole system whereby, though the actual tense forms of a modern language are fewer than those of the ancient ones, the methods of expressing time have been greatly multiplied and varied and new connotations of time given to the old tense forms.

And so we might go on; enough has been said I think, however, to show that it is no exaggeration to say that our ideas of grammar are being revolutionized. I have laid chief stress upon the work of Jespersen because his exposition is the fullest and most recent; but remember that he does not stand alone and that he had an honoured and great predecessor in Sweet in his *New English Grammar* and in such a paper as that of his on *Words, Logic, and Grammar*. We have got to face the task of reconstructing our grammar because owing to the transformation which modern languages have undergone on the formal side, our grammatical categories no longer in any way correspond with the permanent logical categories, and now that formal distinctions are fast disappearing logical considerations are fast becoming all important in the analysis of our speech.

What, you may say, is the bearing of all this on the problem of grammar? To me it seems quite clear, viz. that until these new problems have been worked out fully, new terms and definitions established which really fit the facts of the case, we must, as far as possible, hold our hands with regard to the teaching of grammar, and in so far as we do teach it, confine ourselves to the simplest and most elementary phases of it, above all let us not create confusion worse confounded by trying in yet more rigid fashion than we have done in

the past to tie up the teaching of the grammar of a modern language and land ourselves in all kinds of inconsistencies by forcing it into the frameworks of other languages, however excellent those frameworks may be in themselves when used for those particular tongues.

This is the conclusion to which on the whole the authors of the English Report would seem to have come when they advocated the teaching of Pure Grammar and the abandonment for the time being of the difficult problem of English Grammar. So far as they intend under the head of Pure Grammar to suggest that grammatical teaching should occupy itself mainly with the simple logical basis of speech which is common to all languages I am in agreement with them. But I hope that this Pure Grammar will occupy itself, to use the Report's own phrase, with 'the structure of our thought' rather than the forms of the words, and that when it deals with what the Report calls our 'time-honoured parts of speech' it will not be unmindful of the fact that, so far as they rest upon distinctions of form now often vanished, there is room even here for some reconsideration of things. I feel it is the more important to raise these *caveats* because, by what seems to me a most unfortunate *non-sequitur*, the Report advocates as part of the scheme of 'Pure' grammatical reform the adoption of the nomenclature of the Committee on Grammatical Terminology! Now we owe a great debt to that committee for its long and unselfish labours, we must welcome much of its work and many of its conclusions, but it does seem to me to fail almost entirely to recognize all these new and important aspects of grammar to which the English Report itself pays tribute, and to try to tie down English grammatical teaching more tightly than ever just when it most needs freedom to strike out on new paths for itself.

May I illustrate my point, and first with reference to *case*. Grammar based on the Terminology Report would commit us to the view that English has five cases. It tries to make the best of both worlds by saying on the one hand, through the words of its chairman, that case is a category of meaning and not of form (Sonnenschein, *English Grammar*, Part II, p. 4) and that therefore there is no difficulty in speaking of cases in an uninflected language, but on the other hand we are told (Report, p. 25) that the term 'case' is necessary for English grammar by itself, in view of the surviving inflexions, especially in pronouns. Now, if case is a category of meaning rather than of form, there is no reason whatever why we should stop at five cases, we ought at least to have locatives and instrumentals, and it is surely a little hard that the ablative should be given the cold shoulder. Further, if case is purely a question of meaning and not of form there

is no reason why *him* in 'I gave *him* the book' should be dative, whereas in 'I gave the book to Peter', 'to Peter' is described as a case-phrase in which *Peter* is accusative after *to*. A case-phrase is presumably a phrase which is the equivalent of a case, and what can the case be here but the dative? If, however, we defend cases on the ground of form there is no need in English at all for a vocative, or for any distinction between accusative and dative, even in pronouns. As a last resort the distinction has been defended on yet a third ground, viz. that of position. It is suggested that there must be a difference between dative and accusative because the dative even in nouns always precedes the accusative, as in 'I gave my son a present' and 'It saved my father much trouble', but what of 'I brought it him yesterday'. Surely all the essential ideas of English case-relation are expressed by the three cases—nominative, possessive (which is really much more applicable to English speech-usage than the proposed term genitive) and objective, or still better, dependent case.

Next, with reference to the parts of speech, it seems to me illogical on the part of those who are so anxious about the preservation of cases to suggest that if I say *God's Book*, 'God's' is the genitive case of a noun but if I say '*its* contents', *its* is not the genitive case of a pronoun but is an adjective, the only ground for this distinction being that in Latin and French a distinctive adjectival form has developed. The distinction cannot be defended on the ground that even in English we differentiate between such forms as *my* and *mine* as adjective and pronoun, for the differentiation here is due to entirely different causes. *Mine* in the epithet position naturally lost its *n* before nouns beginning with a consonant and the *my* form soon became universal, or almost so, in this position. There was no reason why *mine* in the predicative position should suffer such a loss and so the distinction between *my* and *mine* is not due to syntactic causes at all.

The case of the verb and its tenses has led to such strange anomalies as talking of 'lest he should write' in 'I fear lest he should write' as a subjunctive equivalent, or of 'I should be glad' in 'If he came I should be glad' as a past subjunctive which has come to express not futurity from a past point of view but remoteness of expectation at the time of speaking. Surely we might cut the Gordian knot of all this complication of phraseology entailed in trying to find English equivalents for every tense form in Latin, or vice versa, without any regard to the real time expressed, and say that in 'If I knew his address I should write to him' we refer to present time and not to future or past at all (whatever the tense forms may

be) the meaning being simply 'my ignorance of his address prevents me now from writing'.

Or to take a more simple case, it is true that 'I think' is the present tense of 'think' and implies present time, but it is not true that 'I eat' is the present of 'eat' in time whatever it may be in tense. In time 'I am eating' is more truly the present of 'eat'. Unfortunately there is no room for the expression of such fundamental distinctions in a scheme of grammatical terminology which has to attempt the impossible task of fitting not one but at least five widely differing languages.

Finally, let us realize that English is becoming a world language which is being taught in the schools of well nigh every civilized nation. Are we going to handicap the attainment of that ideal by tying English down to a system of grammar, which does not recognize to the full the fundamental facts of its structure. May I quote here the words of a distinguished English scholar who was at one time teaching English in Japan. He says 'Since the time when I taught English in Japan I have had very strong views on the absurdity of trying to force on English a grammar and a grammatical terminology which belong to classical languages. When one tries to teach a non-Aryan one quickly finds that the rules and explanations of the ordinary English grammar simply don't work, and one has to invent for oneself an entirely different method of approaching the subject based on the real meaning and implication of the forms. Translation from Japanese into English or vice versa is of course not a question of finding equivalents for words but of finding what is really meant or implied by the phrase in our language and finding in the other something that corresponds to it. Hence much difficulty especially with the English verbs, as, if approached by the ordinary methods of English grammar, there seems to be nothing corresponding to the "moods" and "tenses" in Japanese. I found it, however, quite possible, if one really considered what the verbal forms now meant instead of how they were originally formed, to devise a grammar of the verb which was easily understood and exceedingly helpful to my students. One really wants a new terminology altogether which is free from incorrect implication'.

On that note I am well content to conclude.

Note.—In the interval since this paper was written, Monsieur Brunot's great book *La Pensée et la Langue* has appeared and made yet more clear the necessity for reconsidering our grammatical conceptions, especially in relation to Modern Languages.

THE TEACHING OF GRAMMAR

By MR. S. O. ANDREW

THREE are two questions which we have to ask ourselves:

- (i) What kind of grammar, if any, should we teach to children?
- (ii) Why should we teach it?

It will be convenient, because it will lead us to the heart of our problem, if I begin by discussing very briefly two answers to the second question, Why do we teach grammar?

First Answer: In order to inculcate the habit of correct speech.

The obvious objection to this is that as a matter of fact nobody has ever learnt to speak correctly by the study of grammar. In this there is nothing astonishing: correct speech is an art, and the only way to acquire it is to practise it constantly, like any other art, until it becomes a habit. It may be said in fact that a child is not fit to begin grammar until it has first learned to speak more or less correctly. Grammar on the other hand is a Science, which finds its material in the usages of correct speech. This first answer, therefore, is wrong because it puts the science before the art.

Second Answer: In order to prepare the ground for Latin or some other foreign language.

Now, whatever may justly have been said in favour of this view of grammar from the standpoint of the mediæval Grammar School, it is wholly out of date when applied to conditions of universal vernacular education such as we have to-day. Is it not, in fact, this legacy from the old classical school which is the source of all our troubles, and which has brought the modern teaching of grammar into such contempt? It is a heritage which has saddled us, at least until the other day, with a collection of categories and terms many of which are meaningless in English grammar, and with incredible stupidities like the exercise of parsing uninflected words. Ulterior motives are always a danger to honest teaching; in this case, they have given rise to a pretentious sham education which has been wittily hit off by our most candid modern critic in the saying that 'the English way of learning a thing is to study something else'.

We are brought back therefore to our original questions: What kind of grammar should children learn? and why should they learn it?

I am going to suggest that children should begin not with the grammar of any particular language, but with universal, or as I prefer to call it, Pure Grammar.

In making quite clear what I mean, I must ask your indulgence if I travel over some very familiar ground: which I will do as rapidly as possible. There are certain principles or laws common to all language as such, because based on the analysis of thought. The science dealing with these principles is Pure Grammar.

In the simplest sentence we have

| | |
|-----------------|-----------------------------------|
| | <i>Subject</i> + <i>Predicate</i> |
| i. e., speaking | Noun and Verb. |
| grammatically | or |
| | Pronoun |

Next, these fundamental or 'substantive' parts of speech may have certain qualifying words attached to them, viz. the adjective or the adverb. We have thus five primary parts of speech, easily derived from these five obvious functions in the sentence:—noun, pronoun, adjective, verb, adverb. Let us note that so far we are not regarding the form of words but their function only; a particular word is not always the same part of speech, and in order to decide which part of speech, we must look at it in its context. A word which is normally a noun may in its particular context be an adjective, and vice versa; some words (e. g. 'round') may be many parts of speech, and it is no concern of Pure Grammar which function is the original one, and which the derived. That is a matter for Historical Grammar entirely.

We have just spoken of the form of words; and it will be well at this point to dwell for a moment on the fact that the relation of any word to its fellow words in a sentence, i. e. its function in that particular context, may be shown in English in several ways:

- i. By form or inflexion.
- ii. By order.
- iii. By phrase.

If we say 'He gripp'd me and him gripp'd I', the sense is clear because the form of the pronouns 'I' and 'him' shows that in both parts of the sentence 'I' is subject and 'him' object; but we could not substitute uninflected words like 'Jim' and 'Jack' for the pronouns in the same order, because when we use these words as subject and object, it is the order that determines which is which.

What I wish to draw attention to at this moment, however, is the third way of indicating function: viz. the use of the phrase, because it introduces us to a new part of speech, the preposition. We say indifferently 'the king's crown' or 'the crown of the king' (using the preposition), and in both instances 'king's' and 'of the king' are adjectival in function. Now most definitions of the preposition, so far as my experience goes, are very puzzling to children, and I would

suggest that for them its definition should be 'the little word which introduces an adjective phrase' (or 'an adverb phrase' as the case may be). Children are sometimes told, apparently, that the little words called prepositions can be identified by the fact that they precede a noun. There are, as we all know, no fool-proof rules: I examined recently a number of small boys who had been taught this particular rule, and they said that in the sentence 'Write down the words' 'down' was a preposition because it came in front of 'words'. The only safe rule is for the boy to use his common sense and ask himself whether 'down' in the particular context helps to make an adjective or adverb phrase. Incidentally, the example I have given shows the importance of oral work and of making children *think* of a sentence as they would naturally *speak* it. No child would group together 'down the words' in speech.

Again, the work of a noun, adjective, or adverb may also be performed by a clause; an analysis of the clause yields us the conjunctive parts of speech, viz. the relative pronoun, a special kind of a part of speech already known, and the conjunction, an entirely new part of speech, our seventh and last.

This is the end of our course or at least of the main part of it. We can now go on to our second question, and ask what will the learner gain from it? I should reply, primarily, he will gain what he gains from the study of any other science, a knowledge that the manifold of his experience can be reduced to order, that it can be classified and generalized. He will see that language, the expression of thought, is a *structure* with definite parts which have definite functions, and that these functions can be classified under a quite limited number of categories, and named. Normally, I should suppose, grammar will be the child's first lesson in Science, because language is his first great intellectual experience. As to the age when the study of grammar should *begin*, I am afraid I have not the necessary experience to decide, but I should say that the *essentials* of the course which I have sketched should have been mastered by the time at which a pupil has attained reasonable precision of speech, that is to say, normally, about the age of eleven or twelve. By that time he should understand what is meant by the several parts of speech, by subject, object, and complement, by transitive and intransitive verbs, by a phrase and a clause (and what are their chief varieties), by a relative pronoun and a conjunction. That, I think, is about all that matters. I need hardly say, I do not suggest that it shall all be given in one dose. Let the child begin with noun and verb, using the noun both as subject and object; then *turn* his sentences with the

verb in the passive voice, then add adjectives and adverbs and pronouns, until he is quite familiar with the five primary parts of speech. He will then be ready for phrases and simple clauses. It may be asked: Will grammar of this kind have any practical use? A great deal, I believe, depends on the teacher and the method used. The work should be as far as possible oral, this will make it lively and interesting; it should also be (as I have just suggested) constructive, and not merely analytical, that is to say the learner should be required to build up for himself sentences of different types, and later to amplify simple propositions by the addition of appropriate phrases and clauses. This will keep it in touch with realities, and prevent what is often the curse of grammar exercises, viz. the selection of difficult examples quite outside the learner's experience. E. g. constructive exercises on relative pronouns are particularly valuable: these pronouns are full of difficulty for children, and need constant practice, especially in the oblique cases, or where there is inversion (e. g. 'legends the source of which we do not know'); not to mention thriving weeds of jargon like 'as to which'. It is the experience, I have been told, of some elementary schools that constructive exercises of this kind teach children how to knit together the structure of their sentences, and so strengthen and clarify their sense of style.

May I utter a caution about the use of formal analysis, which is the prescribed exercise in this kind of grammar. It may easily be abused, it may easily become a dull and deadening routine. I suggest that it should only be resorted to when there is really something to elucidate, and only set as a written exercise to test whether a particular construction has been mastered. Many sentences are not suitable for analysis at all. The more idiomatic a sentence is, the less competent is analysis, because it is a purely logical instrument, to deal with it. E. g. No good can be got from analysing even simple sentences like
'Let's tell each other stories',

or, 'What's the good of doing that?'

The time will come when some children will proceed to a second language, and experience has shown that a course of Pure Grammar is a necessary preparation for such a study. Most teachers know that it is especially necessary when the pupil comes to deal with the subordinate clause, because the grammatical structure of such clauses is often such as to require considerable analytical power to understand it. But even children who never go beyond their own language will benefit by having gained this analytical power. They will, we may presume, not only study some of the great English prose classics (and they are not always easy) but will cultivate also the art of exact and

deliberate expression in writing. Such reading, and more particularly such writing, require a trained appreciation of the niceties of clause structure and connexion. Let me give one or two examples of quite common offences against the logical articulation of the complex sentence :

‘One of the best books which has recently appeared’ (wrong antecedent).

‘He gave us a quotation which he didn’t say where it came from’ (double subject, especially common in relative sentences).

‘He was one of those men who couldn’t express what he felt’ (contamination : arising from confusion between two types of relative clause).

‘As he didn’t know the way, he said he had got lost’ (wrong subordination).

It seems to me that the best means of correcting such mistakes is a careful grammatical analysis of the *structure* of the complex sentence. Let me say at once that I have no wish to exaggerate the enormity of loose grammar in young pupils ; it is far more important that a child should write an easy and vigorous style than that he should laboriously compose merely grammatical English. But two good things are better than one, and we want both if possible.

So far we have been dealing with Pure Grammar, the Grammar of Function not of Form ; it has only been English Grammar in the sense that we have been using English examples to illustrate universal principles. Apparently we have been analysing English sentences, really we have been analysing operations of thought. We must now complete our survey, since after all we are teaching English children, by a short study of English grammar as such, that is to say, of the grammar of a particular idiom. Of the three methods of indicating the relations of words in a sentence already mentioned—inflexion, order, and the use of a phrase—the two last will require little further attention since their significance is exhausted by that aspect of them already considered, namely, their function. It remains, therefore, to deal more particularly with inflexion ; there still survive in English, we may remind ourselves, traces of our old inflected speech, and it will be well that our pupils shall complete their grammatical course by studying, so far as it is possible from English examples alone, something of what is meant by an inflected language. Now let us recognize frankly that the whole bulk of our inflected forms is small ; more and more the genius of our idiom has run to expressing grammatical relations by means of word-order and phrase. Let us therefore observe two precautions : (i) to keep separate the grammatical

terms proper to inflected forms, and those which are descriptive of function, and (ii) let us scrupulously avoid applying the terminology of inflexion to words which are not inflected.

E. g. 'man' may be properly described as 'subject' or 'object' in a sentence, but not as nominative or accusative case; and conversely,

'If he should come' may be properly described as a conditional clause, but that does not make 'should come' a conditional mood.

If we are to have a conditional mood, why not an optative or a jussive mood? The inflexions that require study can be limited to possessive case and number for nouns, case, number, and gender for pronouns, and person, tense, mood, voice, and participles for verbs.

With gender in nouns we shall, I hope, have nothing to do. Tense is comparatively simple; the modern nine-tense scheme should be taught—i. e. the simple, imperfect, and perfect forms of the past, present, and future tenses. We have here an almost exact correspondence of form and function, but it will need pointing out that there are still survivals even in common speech of an older and simpler tense scheme; e. g. in the two sentences:

He crossed the street at 1.30.

He was knocked down as he crossed the street.

We have the past tense 'crossed' doing duty for two different modern tenses, the past simple and the past imperfect. In the sentence 'he crossed this street every day' we have still another use.

The term subjunctive mood should be reserved for those parts of the verb which are subjunctive in form; e. g.:

I fear lest he come.

O that 'twere possible, &c.

In the present tense they are of course easily recognizable by the absence of person endings.

It may be asked—

How much of this should be taught, and when?

I should reply (i) 'as much as the pupil can take', and (ii) 'when occasion arises'. For example, it may safely be said that when a pupil begins a more serious study of Shakespeare, some elementary instruction in the subjunctive and its uses becomes almost necessary; it abounds on every page.

I don't think it is any use attempting to dodge the subjunctive. In a recent school text-book on grammar I found the note: 'Whatever may have been the origin of "I'd" in the sentence, "I'd rather", it is now commonly accepted as standing for "I would rather".' This

kind of teaching is sure to be found out, because the child will sooner or later run against 'I had rather', written unmistakably in his Bible or in Shakespeare.

Of what importance is this kind of grammar to the child? Its importance seems to me to lie in the fact that the grammatical terms we are discussing are the appropriate tools or instruments for dealing with the facts of an inflected language, and that the use of the appropriate tool is always the best, and in the end the most economical. Apropos, let me read you a short passage from the memoirs of Baron Martin:

A witness was giving evidence as to certain conversations, but owing to the ambiguities of reported speech his meaning was almost unintelligible. After Counsel had failed to make any impression on him, the learned Baron took him in hand:

Now, he began, tell us exactly what was said.

Well, my lord, he told me that he had been keeping the pig—

No, no: he didn't say that; he spoke in the first person.

No, my lord, I was the first person that spoke.

I mean this, don't keep bringing in the third person.

There was no third person, my lord, only him and me.

But can't you give us his exact words?

Those were the very words he spoke, my lord.

Now look here, my good fellow (said his Lordship, warming), he didn't say he had been keeping the pig; didn't he say, 'I have been keeping the pig'?

I assure you, my lord, there was no mention of your Lordship at all. We are on two different stories, you and me.

Let us return to our point. There are, in particular, certain ambiguous forms in all inflected languages, the use of which in some sentences opens the door to misunderstanding; it seems to me that the natural way and the direct way of removing this danger is to ask the questions, what case? what mood? what part of the verb? is such and such a word. Let me give but one instance—the possible confusion between past participle and past tense. Here are some gleanings from a few pages of 'Julius Caesar':

'All pity choked with custom of fell deeds.'

'His glory not extenuated, nor his offences enforced.'

'Is it fit, the threefold world divided, he should stand . . . ?'

'His corporal motion governed by my spirit.'

'Omitted, all the voyage of their life

Is bound in shallows.'

These are all traps for the young reader. Would he not be warned

against a danger by a knowledge that the ambiguous words are participles? And is not such knowledge the obvious way of meeting it?

May I just give an instance of another kind? It is often said, and rightly, that a study of grammar will not teach correct English. We must, however, distinguish; a study of grammar will not, it is true, affect a child's natural and instinctive speech. The remedy for 'we was' is not grammar but constant practice in the use of standard English. There are, however, certain solecisms which make their appearance when children drop their natural speech and attempt to write in what they consider a literary style. One of these is so common that the illusion which gives rise to it almost deserves a special name. We might call it the 'fallacy of the literary nominative'. I am thinking of examples like 'between you and I', 'let you and I agree', 'he likes you better than I' (meaning me). There is much literary virtue in a nominative, but that is not the only case to suffer; it may be the accusative if that case has what I may call the true artificial ring, e.g. 'Whom do you think he was?' and even 'Whom was it supposed that he was?' The point to notice is that none of these mistakes are natural to speech; they are essentially sophisticated, the result of a conscious effort after style, and that being so, the appeal to grammar, to a scientific analysis of the fault, seems to be the right remedy.

May I say just a word about parsing? which is or was the established exercise in the grammar of inflected speech. English parsing ought to be abolished: there are few words in our language which are worth parsing in full, at least by schoolchildren. The proper exercise, and this only when there is something to elucidate, is to ask a particular question, What case is 'her' in this sentence? what mood is 'bring'? what part of the verb is 'enfolded'? and so on. Parsing like:

man: Nom. case, sing. no., masculine gend., &c.,

has no use at all; it is not science, but rignarole.

One word in conclusion. I have dealt with Pure Grammar and English Grammar separately, but I do not in the least suggest that they should be kept in watertight compartments, or that one should be completed before the other is begun. As soon as the mere elements of Pure Grammar have been mastered, the grammar of English idiom may be introduced and will need to be introduced as occasion calls for it.

THE DISCUSSION AT THE CONFERENCE

THE discussion was opened by MISS BRACKENBURY (Graystone Place Day Training College) who began by declaring that she did not believe in teaching grammar to children under the age of sixteen and would in any case only devote a few weeks of school-life to it. The sentence, she continued, was the unit of language, and a sentence was a social product, the work of two minds, a speaker and a listener, of whom the listener was the more important. Further, a sentence, being a unit, could not be broken up; 'analysis', therefore, consisted in thinking of the sentence from the point of view first of the subject and then of the predicate. The subject itself was just a name (more often a set of words than a single word) which raised in the speaker's mind an idea like some idea he has had before, and which, pronounced in speech and uttered to others, served to them as a mark of what the speaker had in his mind. The essential core of the predicate, The however, of the sentence was the verbal part, the most difficult part, verb performed a double function; it was the assertive word and it characterized action. 'When you are doing as little as ever you can', Miss Brackenbury would ask her children, 'what are you doing?' They replied 'We are just being'. Being is a kind of action. This led on to the distinction between intransitive, where the action is confined to the doer, and transitive, where the action is such that it cannot be performed unless at least one, in many cases two, other persons or things are there besides. In this way, she claimed, it was possible to teach the elements of grammar without using any technical terms.

PROFESSOR SONNENSCHN, who next spoke, made an energetic attack upon Professor Mawer's reference to the Report of the Joint-Committee on Grammatical Terminology. 'I have the greatest possible respect for Professor Jespersen,' he declared, 'whose personal acquaintance I have the honour of enjoying, but I really protest against the idea that Professor Jespersen, however competent a scholar of English he may be,—and he knows far more than ninety-nine out of a hundred Englishmen—is necessarily going to lay down the law or to be regarded as a superior authority to a Committee of about twenty-two persons representing eight different associations, who by no means looked at the matter purely from the point of view of ancient or modern languages, but who, on the contrary, took as their fundamental basis of discussion what I might call Indo-European

syntax, that is the common features that are shared by all languages. I believe it is that which the Government Committee had in mind when they spoke about "Pure Grammar" in their Report'. It was absurd, he added, to describe English as an uninflected language. In a sentence like 'If he had asked me I should have told him the facts', nine out of the twelve words were inflected, which is as high a proportion as you would find in any Latin sentence.

REV. A. DARRY attempted to unfold to the conference a new method of his own for the teaching of grammar; but was unable to finish his remarks within the allotted ten minutes.

DR. P. B. BALLARD said that before coming to the conference he had entertained strong suspicions that grammar was really a branch of psychology; and those suspicions were confirmed by what he had just heard. What was a sentence? Writers on the psychology of thinking had always suggested that when we were brooding, meditating, thinking, we were thinking in complete sentences. We did nothing of the kind. Our sentences were very incomplete. When we thought over a subject at all, our thought expressed itself not in sentences, but in unsystematized words, images, feelings. It was only when we wished to convey our thoughts to other people that we put them into sentences. The notion of a sentence was a very difficult thing to get into the mind of a child. A large number of head-masters of public elementary schools in the west of London had been tabling the mistakes made in composition by children from the age of about ten to fourteen or fifteen. Thirteen millions were examined. A grammatical error occurred once in every four hundred words, but the most frequent blunder was the misuse of the full-stop. The children did not know where to put it, and either omitted it or misplaced it. They did not know where the sentence ended. Who did? 'He came: he saw: he conquered.' Were these three sentences or one sentence? Ought we to punctuate the whole with commas, colons, or full-stops? There was no psychological reason why we should prefer one kind of pointing to the other two. Punctuation was largely a matter of fashion, and it took a long time to get the child to realize what the fashion was. Again, it was often said that grammatical mistakes were invariably due to ignorance of grammar. When an expression like 'One of the best books that has ever been written' occurred in the first nine editions of one of Mr. Hilaire Belloc's volumes, did it follow that the author was ignorant of the laws of grammar? Or again, when about two-thirds down page 169 of the *Report on the Teaching of English* you light upon the following sentence: 'Training in clear and correct speech and in reading aloud

are essential', you would be rash to assume without further consideration that the English Committee did not know grammar. Yet mistakes of this kind arose from precisely the same causes as most of those in the exercises of schoolchildren. They were due to the disturbance produced by the presence of intervening words. Finally, Dr. Ballard asserted, it had been shown over and over again that between ability in grammar and ability in composition there is no relation whatever.

MISS PHILPOT emphasized certain difficulties and dangers in the teaching of grammar. The children, in the first place, saw no need for it. When they were learning a foreign language they knew that they could not speak it or read it before they had acquired some knowledge of grammar. But they could speak English and understand it according to the level of their intelligence at the time; why then, they felt, should they be required to study English grammar? There was a further difficulty in the teacher himself, since his interest in grammar was so coloured by the influence of other languages and by that still more dangerous thing, his knowledge of the past history of his own tongue, that he was liable to forget that half the interest in grammar could not possibly exist for the child who lacked that knowledge. Most of those present, Miss Philpot thought, were glad to see a recognition in the English Report of the value of functional as opposed to formal grammar. The difficulty was, however, that teachers were on the horns of a dilemma; they wanted to initiate children into the science of language before they began French or Latin, while at the same time they were conscious that children of this age were not capable of an abstract interest in the functions and structure of language. The teacher, in consequence, had to fall back upon some fictitious interest, such as coloured chalks or those very intriguing sentences that Mr. Morgan gives in his Grammar. But if the teaching of Pure Grammar was difficult, the teaching of English Grammar was positively dangerous. It was full of pitfalls, and over and over again the conscientious teacher of English grammar must feel that he is teaching something of which he himself is not sure, something that is not necessarily true.

MISS CLARK taught grammar to children of eleven or twelve because it was a help to the French mistress, the German mistress, and the Latin mistress. It saved these teachers much time and the children came on to foreign languages with very many difficulties cleared away. Not that she agreed with Miss Philpot for one moment that children disliked grammar. On the contrary, they always liked it—an extraordinary fact perhaps, but true.

Dr. McKERROW had found it very difficult, if not impossible, to bring home to Japanese the facts of the English language as they were presented, or misrepresented, in English grammar-books. He asked whether it were not the fact that several sorts of grammar were needed. The Report on Grammatical Terminology was admirable for its purpose, which was to find a terminology capable of being used in different classes of the European group of languages. It was, however, quite a different matter when it came to teaching English to children who are not necessarily, or even probably, going on to learn other languages. And yet another problem was presented by the teaching of foreigners, whose language was entirely different from one's own. We needed, therefore, something like three grammars at least.

MR. A. WATSON BAIN professed himself in general agreement with Professor Mawer and Mr. Andrew, and in general disagreement with the views of his own teacher of Latin, Professor Sonnenschein. For himself, he thought that all the grammar that was absolutely necessary for British people could be set down on half a sheet of paper. He would even go farther than the first two speakers. He did not believe that there was such a thing as case in English at all. Instead of speaking about genitive, or dative, or accusative, or nominative, it is quite enough to speak of subject and object; and in the case of pronouns where there were inflected forms the phrase, indirect object, was convenient. A Frenchman never talked about genitive or dative, but only of *régime direct* and *régime indirect*. For the great majority of English children no grammatical teaching of any kind was necessary, but to the small percentage who would later take up a foreign language a little simple elementary grammar should be taught at about ten years of age. The fact that the Joint Committee on Grammatical Terminology had a number of distinguished people sitting upon it did not carry any weight with him. Equally distinguished Frenchmen some years ago put forth a report on French grammar, and recommended among other things that the past participle need no longer agree with the preceding direct object. The suggestion was entirely opposed to the genius of the French language, and no journalist or writer took the slightest notice of it. The French past participle still agreed with the preceding direct object. In any event, whether grammar was taught in small doses or large, he strongly deprecated the use of English literature, and especially English poetry, as a storehouse of pegs for grammatical teaching.

MR. GEORGE SAMPSON spoke on behalf of the schools which, although

they had hardly been mentioned hitherto in the discussion, were the most important in the country, because they represented at once the great bulk of the population and the most needy bulk of the population. The position of grammar in the elementary schools was quite simple: in the ordinary sense, grammar should not be found there at all. What children needed to be taught in the elementary school was not English grammar but the English language. To attempt to teach them formal grammar was to thrust upon them a science for which they had no data. The elementary schoolchild began his education with his language in a state of disease, and it was the business of the teacher to purify and disinfect that language. Mr. Sampson illustrated what grammar-teaching used to mean in the elementary schools by reading, to the amusement of the conference, a specimen of the 'Grammatical Test Cards' for Standard 6, one of the questions being, 'Define clearly what is meant by the case of nouns'. He concluded by remarking that if elementary schoolchildren transferred to secondary schools found any difficulty in beginning Latin or French, it was because they knew so little of language, not because they knew no grammar. They had never been taught to observe the simple and obvious phenomena of their own language.

The conference was brought to an end with brief replies from Professor Mawer and Mr. Andrew.

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A Question of Taste

By

John Bailey

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A QUESTION OF TASTE

We live in an age in which all established opinions, philosophic, religious, political, and, certainly not least, scientific, are attacked or at least questioned. And only the narrowest conservatives doubt that this lively and continuous questioning is partly, at any rate, a sign of health. To live is to change, some one said, I forget who; and to live long is to have changed often. Religion, art, politics—these are the oldest of man's higher interests, and they would not still be his interests to-day if they had not changed often and much. It is as true in these things as it is in things physical that not to change at all is either impossible or fatal: as no doubt the converse of this is equally true in both. There is no life without continuity: that is certain; but also there is no life without change. The inquiring, investigating, arguing mind of man is, and ought to be, always at work increasing knowledge, correcting opinion, building up judgement on a surer foundation. In this useful and necessary business our generation is very actively engaged. And we may welcome its activity; with only one caution. The fashionable but quite false and even absurd doctrine of equality leads people to suppose that everybody has a right to an opinion on every subject. 'This is not quite so', as Matthew Arnold said in reply to the American newspaper proprietor who had declared that 'a good editorial' was the highest achievement of the human intellect. The unlucky gentleman who received this snub, of which, however, he was probably quite incapable of perceiving the majestic remoteness of contempt, clearly had no acquaintance with any high productions of the human intellect whatever, and had no power at all of forming an opinion about them.

The truth is, I suppose, that the doctrine of equality has produced its worst as well as its best effects in that gentleman's country, in America. I have not been across the Atlantic, but I understand that every European who goes to the United States is struck by the easy freedom and friendliness of intercourse which everywhere prevails in that country, even among strangers of the most dissimilar age, habits, and position in life. That we may well envy. It is the fraternity which is the only true side of equality. But the common faith in equality produces also less desirable results. It encourages such people as Mr. James Gordon Bennett, as we have just seen, to

pronounce upon the highest productions of the human intellect. It produces the atmosphere of totally ignorant self-confidence of which Mr. Mencken, of *The American Mercury*, has collected and contributed so many examples, at once painful and entertaining, in his volume *Americana*. I will quote one of his several hundreds. In the Legislature of the State of Georgia, a measure was introduced for the establishment of public libraries. 'Representative Hal Wimberley' made a speech against the bill, in the course of which he said that there were only three books in the world worth reading, the Bible; the hymn-book, and the almanack. 'These three are enough for anyone', he added. 'Read the Bible—it teaches you how to act. Read the hymn book—it contains the finest poetry ever written. Read the almanack—it shows you how to figure out what the weather will be. There isn't another book that is necessary for anyone to read, and therefore I am opposed to all libraries.'

Now this gentleman may have been an admirable husband and father, a competent and successful grocer or draper, a respected deacon of his chapel, even a sincere and practising Christian. But plainly he had never had any intellectual life at all. Having never gone through any intellectual experience, having never felt in himself what it is to know any subject which requires thinking, he had no conception of the difference between ignorance and knowledge. If he had possessed any real knowledge of anything, if he had really mastered even the elements of history or philosophy, chemistry, biology, theology, what you will, he would have been aware that knowledge and ignorance are not the same thing, and that literature was one of the things of which he was entirely ignorant. In that case he would not have made this foolish speech, and would not have earned the unpleasant honour of a place among Mr. Mencken's collection of the curiosities of fatuous ignorance and conceit.

America is the land of extremes: of big business, sky-scrapers, and multi-millionaires. We here in this humbler land of the *via media* reach neither her heights nor her depths. It would be difficult to find here any one quite so absurd as Representative Hal Wimberley. But if that were all I should have no excuse for the subject on which I am venturing to address you. I am afraid we must not congratulate ourselves too confidently on not being as this Publican. I am afraid that what saves us from such follies as his is rather habit, a prudential² fear of giving ourselves away, or a tradition of respect for authority which we owe to our monarchical, aristocratic, and ecclesiastical past, than any reasoned conviction that there is a truth in these matters which can compel assent, and a law which can insist

upon being obeyed. And I want to try, in the humblest way and in fear of falling under my own condemnation, to assert the opinion, that such a law and such a truth, though we may not be able to work out all their details, there actually and demonstrably is.

It is a daring attempt: for the view I want to criticize, the view that one opinion in these matters of art and letters is as good as another, has had the support of very distinguished thinkers. It would perhaps be impossible to make a longer intellectual journey than one which starts with Representative Hal Wimberley and ends with Lord Balfour. But 'thought is quick', as Hobbes long ago said when he found it travelling from the English Civil War to the value of a Roman penny; and mind, unencumbered with matter, can be gone in one moment from Mr. Wimberley and have arrived, even at Lord Balfour, in the next. So if I ask you, as I do, to make that journey, I hope you may accomplish it in a moment and yet not arrive too much out of breath.

In philosophy, if he is aware that such a thing exists, Mr. Wimberley is certainly a dogmatist and probably a radical dogmatist. Lord Balfour, into whose deeper waters I, who am no philosopher, venture with less confident tread, may, I imagine, be described as, philosophically, a conservative sceptic. He finds valid reasons for questioning many or most intellectual or metaphysical dogmas; but, as he also finds that without at least the fundamental ones neither thought nor being can be explained, he re-establishes them and accepts them as what we cannot do without. In his *Theism and Humanism*, for instance, where his delightful lucidity deceives us all, at any rate for a moment, into supposing that we can follow a metaphysical argument, he discusses æsthetic judgements, and asserts, on the one hand, that experience shows them to be chaotic, inconsistent, and without any general acceptance; and, on the other, that they are among the greatest proofs of a spiritual and even of a divine reality as the ultimate explanation of experience. So in his *Romanes Lecture on Beauty* he asks this question: 'If a picture or a poem stirs my admiration can there be any meaning in the statements that my taste is bad and that if I felt rightly I should feel differently?' And he substantially answers that there is no meaning in such statements; and, assuming that variability is proof of unsubstantiality, goes on to instance such changes of taste as are exhibited when we look back from our views of Shakespeare to Voltaire's, or contrast the eighteenth-century attitude towards Gothic architecture with that of the nineteenth which, he declares, substituted 'tasteless imitation for ignorant contempt'. Yet even after this destructive analysis of æsthetic

judgements he makes what Arnold used to call a return upon himself. In the last pages of the lecture he insists that his 'destruction of æsthetic orthodoxy' does not involve any 'diminution of æsthetic values'. And he adds that the destructive point of view which he has been pressing is 'not tolerable, even provisionally, unless there be added to it some mystical reference to first and final causes'. This is of course a reference to the position, to which I have already alluded, which he develops at length in *Theism and Humanism*, that the greatness of æsthetic experiences insists on a spiritual origin and disappears without such an origin. In his own words in that book, 'If any man will test this for himself, let him recall the too rare moments when beauty gave him a delight which strained to its extremest limit his powers of feeling; when not only the small things of life, but the small things of Art—its technical dexterities, its historical associations—vanished in the splendour of an unforgettable vision; and let him ask whether the attribution of an effect like this to unthinking causes, or to an artist created and wholly controlled by unthinking causes, would not go far to impair its value.' And he goes on to argue that these are values and experiences too great for us to surrender, and that we are entitled to demand for them the only ground on which they can stand.

I hope and believe that no one who knows me, in this audience or elsewhere, will think me capable of the folly of crossing philosophical swords with Lord Balfour. Into the discussion of the theory of æsthetics I am quite incompetent to enter. So far as I understand Lord Balfour's philosophic conclusion I agree with it. But I am not going to venture out of my depth so far as to say anything about it. What I want to attempt is something much more modest; something fitter, perhaps, for an occasion like this and an Association like our own, which is after all, a literary, not a philosophic, body. Whatever our philosophic incapacities, we all are, or all believe ourselves to be, capable of observing the facts. I want to ask whether the facts really are quite what Lord Balfour and many other people represent them to be. I have taken Lord Balfour as perhaps the most distinguished exponent of the view which I wish to combat. And I have quoted some of his words, and shall quote more, because what he has said and written is among the most recent, as well as among the most lucid and interesting, expressions of that view. It is a very common one. It is held especially by the so-called 'plain man' of whom Lord Balfour is not usually regarded as the type. But whoever holds it usually bases it, as Lord Balfour does, partly on an account of the facts which I believe to be entirely erroneous. He asserts, for

instance, that, in these matters of æsthetics, 'we can appeal neither to reason nor experience nor authority'; for 'those who produce works of art disagree; those who comment on works of art disagree; while the multitude, anxious to admire where they "ought", and pathetically reluctant to admire where they "ought not", disagree like their teachers'. I wish to ask simply whether this is true? Is the world of art and letters really in such a state of confused anarchy? I am going to suggest that it is not. I am going to urge that the alleged facts which are the foundation of this theory of the exceptional instability of æsthetic judgements are not facts at all: and that with the collapse of the foundation the superstructure collapses also. I am going to suggest that there is as much stability in æsthetic judgements as in ethical or political or philosophic or scientific; that the reputations of poets and artists are not less but more assured than those of biologists or statesmen or metaphysicians; and that, though it is possible to point, as Lord Balfour points, to striking varieties and inconsistencies of judgement in matters of art and literature, there is nothing exceptional in that. In all these high matters where the human mind treads with such difficulty and uncertainty, it is easy to point to disputes and contradictions. But I suggest that they are not more but less conspicuous in the field with which we are concerned than in the others. I cannot stay to illustrate at length. But is there any need? Are not the see-saws of philosophy notorious, Socrates contradicting the Sophists, Aristotle criticizing Plato, Bacon pouring contempt on the Schoolmen, Kant refuting Hume, down to Lord Balfour himself attacking Mr. Bertrand Russell? So in science we find great discoveries long unaccepted or even despised. It takes one hundred years or more for the Copernican system to get itself established; Leibnitz obstinately resists Newton's doctrine of gravitation: Mendel's biological discovery, nearer our own day, must have seemed to him to be stillborn: while the great Darwin who was, not so long ago, treated almost as infallible, is now, in some respects, so sharply attacked and even partially dethroned that we may read in a recent book, the contributors to which are mostly philosophers and men of science, one of them being Lord Balfour himself, that 'the legacy of Darwin is now in a state of chaos'. So again recent biology is stated to join with the idealists in exposing the limitations and overthrowing the assumptions on which Victorian naturalism was based. Into the similar revolutions of theological, ethical, and political theory I need not go: they are obvious and notorious: no one can so much as begin any of those studies without discovering them at once.

Now of course we cannot deny that there have also been changes and divergences of opinion in matters aesthetic. Lord Balfour cites some of the most striking: Voltaire on Shakespeare; Wordsworth on the Eighteenth Century, and so on. One of those mentioned by Lord Balfour depends on the alleged contempt felt for Gothic architecture in the eighteenth century. And this is of course true, speaking generally. But Sir Reginald Blomfield¹ has lately pointed out that it is by no means so absolutely true as has been commonly supposed. Many of the great classical architects greatly admired Gothic, and said so. They did not desire to 'reproduce Gothic, having an excellent manner of their own'; but they paid remarkable tributes, which Sir Reginald quotes, to its fine qualities, as, for instance, the *délicatesse singulière*, of which a great French architect of that time spoke, declaring that the best builders of his own day would find themselves very hard driven to equal it. Still, no doubt, on that and other subjects, artistic and literary, there have been striking changes of opinion. The poetic genius who summed up the whole Middle Age in one immortal creation was almost entirely unread for two or three centuries even in his own Italy, and of course still more outside it, so that we find a casual allusion to him, one day at Cambridge in the early eighteenth century, drawing from Gray, who himself read everything worth reading but knew how little other people read, the startled query, 'Sir, you read Dante?' And similar changes of taste may obviously be discovered in the plastic arts. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries Guido Remi was worshipped; in the nineteenth he was despised; in the twentieth, I believe, he and all the late Classicists and Eclectics, with the masters of the Baroque who followed them, are beginning to get back something of the favour which they used to enjoy so abundantly. Another still more curious change of opinion struck me forcibly the other day when I was reading Macaulay's History. We have lately been taught that Chinese works of art are among the very greatest which the human genius has produced. Whether the praisers of old Chinese art have a little overshot the mark, as often happens in the enthusiasm of discovery, I do not discuss. But, even if that is so, as I incline to think it is, no one now doubts that Chinese art is not only fine art but great art. Now Macaulay wrote only about seventy years ago, and probably represented the current opinion—not indeed among lovers of art, of whom he was never one—but among scholars and men of letters. Yet this is what he says of the collection of Chinese porcelain placed at Hampton Court by William and Mary:

¹ *Quarterly Review*, Jan. 1926.

'Mary had acquired at the Hague a taste for the porcelain of China, and amused herself by forming at Hampton Court a vast collection of hideous images and of vases on which houses, trees, bridges, and mandarins were depicted in outrageous defiance of all the laws of perspective. The fashion, a frivolous and inelegant Queen, spread fast and wide. In a few years almost every great house in the kingdom contained a museum of these grotesque baubles.'

It is true that the 'grotesque baubles', on which Macaulay pours contempt, were never, or very rarely, works of the earlier and greater periods of China; but that will scarcely help us, for if Macaulay had ever seen any art of the Tang or Sung periods he (and the intelligent people whom he represents) would probably have thought it not less but more grotesque than the seventeenth- and eighteenth-century porcelain of which he complained.

Now I think you will admit that I have not loaded the dice in my own favour. I have made the frankest admission that history exhibits some great changes of opinion in matters æsthetic. I am now going to attempt to show that, while this is true, it does not prove that æsthetic judgements are in any way exceptionally unstable, as is commonly alleged and believed. Indeed, I believe I shall show, as I promised a few minutes ago, that they are rather more stable than their rivals in matters of similar difficulty. What I appeal to is the facts of history as we see them in the lives of poets and artists, and before this Association I must of course speak chiefly of poets.

Let me take first an assertion very often made and taken to prove the instability of æsthetic judgements, or even the impossibility of forming them at all. It is said that great poets have commonly been ignored in their lifetime; whereas if there were any secure and ascertained knowledge as to what constitutes a fine poem, they would be quickly, if not immediately, recognized. I remember a few years ago hearing one of the finest living masters of English prose, I mean Lord Dunsany, say in a lecture on Modern Poetry, that poets have in all times found their contemporaries hostile or indifferent. He instanced Keats and Shelley, of course. But I think that when I asked him for another instance he was rather at a loss. The truth is that the common belief which he was expressing is a complete delusion. Keats and Shelley, and Chatterton—another poet often used to support it—died too young to have had time to make their impression. Shelley and Keats might easily have lived to 1870 or 1880 (Shelley's 'Jane' did live into the 'eighties, and I was asked, as a boy, to have tea with her) by which time their names were honoured

wherever English is read. It would indeed, I think, be the truth, or not far from the truth, to say that all great poets who have lived to be old, and many or most who have died in middle age, have enjoyed quite as much fame as was good for them. This was the experience, if I am not mistaken, speaking broadly and generally, of all the great Greek poets, of all the Roman, of all the Italian, of all the French, and all the German. And the same is true of our own poets: Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Ben Jonson, Milton, Dryden, Pope, Gray, Goldsmith, Cowper, Wordsworth, Coleridge, Byron, Tennyson, Arnold, Browning, Swinburne: all of these, and one might mention many more, of course, had had the praises of their poetry ringing in their ears long before they died. The only important exception whom I can remember is Blake; and Blake almost took pains to be unpopular. If this is so, if in all countries and in all times the greatest poets have been recognized as great by their contemporaries, can it be doubted that the qualities which make greatness in poetry have always been perceived though they have never perhaps been very successfully defined? The philosophers and men of science have met with no such unfailing contemporary admiration. They have often been entirely ignored, and worse than ignored. Descartes lived a wanderer in fear of persecution; the greatness of Socrates led him to the cup of hemlock; Galileo found that thinking was the road to prison, and Bruno that it was the road to the stake. If we have not always crowned poets with the laurel I do not remember that we have ever burnt or poisoned them.

And the contrast goes further and is still more in favour of æsthetic judgements. Not only are these judgements quicker than philosophic to recognize what is great, but I venture to say that they are far less frequently disallowed by time, the only ultimate court of appeal. How many even of the greatest philosophic reputations have crumbled in a century or even in a generation! Who now reads the little that remains to be read of the Gnostic philosophers who once disputed the intellectual empire of the world with the philosophy of Greece and the theology of Christianity? Who now writes of Descartes or Leibnitz, or even Kant and Hegel, except for the purpose of giving them their passing place in the history of philosophy? Does any one now think that any of them solved the problem of truth? Where now is the fame of Herbert Spencer who, forty years ago, was being translated into all languages? I find no such chaos of revolving uncertainty in what seems to Lord Balfour the anarchical world of art and letters. I find, in fact, the exact contrary of it. Which is that has survived uninjured by time, the

poetry or the philosophy of Coleridge? Has there ever been a poet, I am bold enough to ask, who has fallen from his throne after sitting on it for a hundred years? Have we to-day quite forgotten any poet at all who has ever been for two successive generations acclaimed as great by that best critical opinion which is alleged to be so uncertain and contradictory? The world of books gets ever larger and larger, and the world of men gets ever busier and busier; there is continually more and more to read and less and less time for reading. Yet I doubt whether of all the poets of Greece, Rome, Italy, France, England, there is a single one who, having possessed the fame of greatness for any considerable time, has now lost it altogether. Great art has always, or nearly always, in it a transitory element of contemporary fashion. The popularity which comes of that passes away. Happy is the poet with whom it does nothing worse. The Mediævalist in Dante, the Provençal amorist in Petrarch, the Puritan in Milton, the Victorian in Tennyson, provoked inevitable reactions which have in each case threatened the poet. But neither the Classical Renaissance, nor the religious Reformation, nor the so-called Age of Enlightenment, wave following wave, each more alien to Dante than its predecessor, could kill the master of the *Divine Comedy*. So with smaller men. We have not so much time as our ancestors had for reading Ovid or Petrarch or Ronsard, and we may be irritated by things which once made them popular. But does any competent judge doubt that they are among the immortal company; or, again, does any one doubt that Tennyson, in spite of the reaction against certain of his characteristics, is, and will always be, with them?

I submit then, that the facts show that, in spite of apparent exceptions, there has on the whole been quite a remarkable stability in æsthetic opinion. And some of the apparent exceptions are, I think, of easy explanation. If Dante passed some centuries under a cloud, it was an anti-ecclesiastical, anti-mediæval, anti-scholastic cloud; not one of æsthetic opposition. It was the schoolman and the mediæval Churchman who was disliked, not the poet. I suspect that whenever any one of real literary capacity read him (which those other prejudices seldom allowed) his greatness stood out visibly enough, as it did to the very English and very Protestant Milton.

It would be easy to fill a book with illustrations of this theme of the security of æsthetic fame. Has there ever been a time when Greek poetry or Greek sculpture has been denied its glory? It is true that in the dark centuries, after the fall of the Empire, Christian fanaticism and barbarian ignorance joined in indifference or hostility

to the noblest remains of the civilization they had destroyed. And I am aware that a living writer on art, whose business it is to admire nothing which has ever been admired before, has scoffed at the frieze of the Parthenon as 'mere artizan work', and described Phidias as 'the Giotto, but an inferior Giotto, of the slope which starts from the eighth century n.c.' But as it is only after much hesitation and with doubting condescension that this gentleman graciously consents, in his own words, to 'give a place among men of letters' to a number of rather well-known writers, among whom, if you please, are Aristotle, Hobbes, and Samuel Johnson, we, whose concern is rather with literature than with art, can judge of the value of his opinions. He is apparently one of those who are unaware that eccentricity is the escape of those who are incapable of originality. Anyhow it is amusing to be told, as I have been told, that when the French painter Matisse, one of the most adored gods of this writer's idolatry, visited the British Museum, he was lost in wonder and delight before these very sculptures of which his admirer has spoken so slightly. He could not be got out of the room, I hear, and I do not suppose that he found nothing but 'mere artizan work' in the frieze, or that, when he got into the next room and saw the wonderful reliefs on the broken columns of the temple of Ephesus, he agreed with his disciple's view, which is that, if the big figures of the Parthenon pediments could still be called 'a significant example of Greek art', they were the last and nothing came after them. The truth, I expect, is that the artist formed his opinion by his own experience of the reality, while the critic formed his too much by a desire to contradict established opinion, and separate himself from the mass of the plain people who follow it, and who may, for all his contempt, have very good reasons for doing so. They sometimes, indeed, follow it in mere ignorance, and sometimes even in insincerity. But they may well be accepting it, and often are, in the right humility of the spirit of a learner.

That humility is, I think, the right and natural attitude for all of us about all these matters at the beginning and about some of them always. When Mr. Binyon, or some other critic whom I know to be a fine judge of art by what he has written in matters where I can fully follow him, tells me that an early Chinese landscape or figure is of extraordinary quality, I think I am wise, supposing that I do not perceive its quality, not indeed to pretend to perceive it, but to think it likely that my failure to do so is due, not to the non-existence of the thing to be perceived but to my limited or undeveloped powers of æsthetic perception. It is the simple truth, if

I do not blind my eyes to it, that my stupidity, or my small acquaintance with such work, is a much more probable explanation of my difficulty than that a critic of Mr. Binyon's fine sensitiveness and wide knowledge should assert the presence of a quality which in fact is not there. Art is an experience which must be lived, not merely seen from outside; and, like all such great experiences, it requires some training and preparation. During that preliminary stage I do not see why there is anything arbitrary or unreasonable in suggesting an acceptance of the opinions of authority. It is natural and right that a boy or a girl who is growing up should say, 'Why am I to think Rubens or Rembrandt great painters, Sophocles or Shelley great poets, when I get no pleasure out of any of them?' There may be philosophic answers to that question, so often, so reasonably, and so urgently asked by minds that are beginning to awake. If there are such answers, I am not the person to give them, and make no pretence to do so. But I do believe that there are two simple answers, the value of which the plainest of the questioners can test for himself. The first is the answer of authority. In all subjects, medicine, architecture, history—what you will—authority rightly says to the student: 'Take this now on trust from me: later on you will find out for yourself that it is true.' I know, and we have seen to-day, that there are a great many anarchical sceptics, distinguished and undistinguished, who assert that in matters of æsthetics no authority is discoverable and one opinion is as good as another. I have tried to show that the history of critical opinion about poetry is, in flat contradiction to this, a record which may be called one of agreement, continuity, and stability, if compared with anything that can be found in the parallel fields of science and philosophy. There are marked personal differences, of course. One lover of poetry delights in Catullus, another in Virgil; one in Shelley, another in Wordsworth. So, one lover of landscape may find his chief pleasure in Rembrandt, another in Hobbema, another in Turner, another in Crome. But these differences need not affect the beginner with scepticism. For he will find that no one who has really had the experience of poetry at all, will deny the greatness, either of Catullus or of Virgil, either of Wordsworth or of Shelley. The furthest such a man will go will be to say something like, 'Oh, yes; very fine; I can see that; but it is not the sort of fineness that hits me.' I don't believe that any real admirer of Catullus would ever entirely miss the fine quality of Milton; or that any true Miltonian could fail to recognize the equally consummate but utterly dissimilar fineness of Catullus.

But if our young man is referred to authority he will very naturally ask how he is to recognize it. And at first sight the answer may seem difficult. In this delicate field of æsthetics we have no degrees or diplomas to guide us as we have in Science or Law. A First Class in a University Arts Examination, whether Classical or Modern, only proves knowledge, and we are looking for something subtler than that. Yet I think there is a very rough, but not unsatisfactory, test which any young man can apply for himself. Where is authority on matters of art and literature? It is among those who really love them. Let a man look round his acquaintances. He will find many who are perfectly indifferent to art or poetry; and he will find a few who seldom pass a day without making time for a little poetry; who would never spend a single night in Paris without finding their way to the Louvre; who would declare that these experiences of art and poetry are among the very greatest of their lives. Have not these an authority which, as it were, proves itself? And if so, may not our young man be reassured? for it is not generally among such people, but among those others who would not even pretend that art and poetry have any serious part in their lives, that he will hear the doctrine of *quot homines tot sententiae*, or be told that one opinion in these things is as good as another, because nothing is known about them, and no opinion either counts or matters.

It is true that we have found Lord Balfour joining himself in a kind of way to this company. But I suggest that his language shows that he is not of it, and that his connexion with it is in the nature of an intellectual adventure of exploration, and cannot imply any intention to take up a permanent residence in so uncongenial a world. For no one asserts the reality of æsthetic experiences more decisively than he: indeed, as we have seen, he uses their strength and quality as one of the foundations on which he builds a spiritual view of the universe. No one is further removed than he from the cynic of the club or the counting-house, who pooh-poohs questions of art and poetry as fanciful, unimportant, and even unreal. Only, as I venture to think, he has let his intellectual analysis play with difficulties and contradictions of detail till he has allowed them to blind him to the broad facts of agreement. If disagreements in our details of its application are fatal to the reality of a standard of value, how are such standards to be maintained anywhere, in Philosophy, in Science, most notably of all, perhaps, in ethics? Philosophers, men of Science, Moralists, all disagree, often sharply, in the application of their principles to concrete cases. But we do not

allow ourselves to doubt that science and ethics have principles which prove themselves, or that among those who study and practise them agreement enormously outweighs difference. Lord Balfour takes the experiences of love which, like all purely æsthetic experiences, have, as he says, 'an inherent value quite apart from their practical effects', and would use them in support of his anarchical conclusions. He asks, 'why should we be impatient because we can give no account of the characteristics common to all that is beautiful, when we can give no account of the characteristics common to all that is lovable?' But the answer is, I suggest, that in each of these matters, broadly and generally, we can give such an account. What are such words as 'lovable', 'aimable', 'liebenswertig', except a refutation of his view? They mean that men can and do recognize the qualities they love. We do not all prefer the same person any more than we all prefer the same picture or poem. But in each case, if we are capable at all, either of love or of appreciation of the beautiful, we never doubt that there is such a thing as the lovable or that there is such a thing as the beautiful; and we see that, in spite of the differences of personal idiosyncrasy which in each case give the variety of life, there is a general agreement about both which on the whole visibly prevails and exhibits our human nature as an ordered system and community, not as a mere assemblage of warring atoms. In the long run, and upon the whole, everybody who has these feelings at all loves lovable and beautiful people rather than ugly and odious people. And everybody, when given a chance, will in the long run prefer fine art and fine literature to the ugly, the vulgar, or the cheap. Lord Balfour's own illustration, therefore, turns against himself, and if our young man whom we are trying to reassure will examine his almost passionate insistence on the values of emotional and æsthetic experience, he need not, I suggest, regard him as more than an apparent exception to the general rule that it is those who have never experienced these things at all who assert that *one* opinion about them is as good as another.

But I should like to attempt a further step in the process of reassurance. After all authority is only authority, a thing outside ourselves. And in these matters, as in religion, if authority may legitimately persuade us to lend an ear, it is only personal experience which finally convinces. Can we give our young doubter that final proof? I venture to suggest that we can: at least in part and enough to carry him further. It is true that time is the only ultimate arbiter, and that at sixteen or twenty time has not had much room to work in. But it can be seen at work even by the

youngest. I want to deal with personal experience, so I pass hastily over what every one can see of the work of time in confirming the judgements of those whom I spoke of just now, those who really care for art and letters, and in disallowing the judgements of those who do not. Everybody knows without being told, or can easily discover, that there were fifty or a hundred novels published at the same time as *Far From the Madding Crowd*, or *Lord Jim*, which sold fifty times as well as either of them; that there were many musical comedies far more popular at the time than *Iolanthe* and *The Mikado*; that many scribblers of verse in the time of Charles II were thought, except by Dryden and Marvell, to be finer poets than John Milton. But there are few more consoling facts about human nature than that, while we all enjoy our own vulgarities, we none of us enjoy those of our fathers or grandfathers. The vulgarities of yesterday are to-day not merely unpopular; they are entirely forgotten, unknown, and undiscoverable. The poets who successfully rivalled Milton, the novels which were so much more popular than Hardy's, the music-hall trivialities which drew better houses than Gilbert and Sullivan, have suffered something much more than a mere loss of popularity. It is not merely that we no longer enjoy them; we cannot perceive in them anything that anybody ever could have enjoyed. If the books were reprinted, not a copy would be sold; if the comic operas were reproduced, they would be played for one night to an empty house. This process is going on every day, though it takes fifty years or so to see its full result. I suppose Joseph Conrad was never, even at the end of his life, anywhere near the fortunate circle of best sellers. The contemporary victory falls always to those who make the fullest surrender to contemporary ephemeralities. But the final victory is to those who know that imaginative power and creative form will not be limited by the fashions of the moment, being themselves immortal and choosing immortal stuff to work in. They can afford to wait; and it is safe to prophesy that Conrad who like those others was early recognized by lovers of literature, though by no one else, will be again and again reprinted in days when no one will remember the very names of his best-selling contemporaries.

This process, time's separation of the living from the dead, of the eternally alive from those who were never really alive at all, is one which may be observed by everybody. Our young inquirer may discover it for himself. But I want, as my last word, to suggest that he may do something better than that. He may, if I am not mistaken, easily discover it not merely for but in himself. He may

convert the truth of observation into a truth of personal experience; the only way of full assurance, as I hope we agreed, in these matters.

The method I suggest is perfectly simple. Anybody of any age can begin trying it to-morrow. And he can try it in whatever field he prefers: literature, or art, or music. Let him take the poems of any poet whom authority pronounces great and then those of one whom authority ignores or treats as second or third rate. The poems of Keats, if you will, and those of Leigh Hunt or Miss Ella Wheeler Wilcox: or *The Prelude* and *Aurora Leigh*. And then let him take *The Heart of Midlothian*, or *Pride and Prejudice*, or *Middlemarch* or *Nostromo*: and with it the first novel of the moment that is lying on the book-stalls. Let him read his pair of poems or novels three times through in a year. Or let him take a Rembrandt etching—good reproductions are easily obtained—and an engraving after such a painter as the late B. W. Leader; and hang both on the walls for a year. Let him play or hear played every day for a month the chief tunes in *Don Giovanni* and the chief tunes in, say, *The Merry Widow*. I confidently assert that in every case authority will be justified of her children. I am sure it will be found that the poems and the novel which are called great are liked more at the third reading while their rivals are liked less. Leader and even Leigh Hunt and Mrs. Browning will have lost ground while Rembrandt and Wordsworth will have gained. Scott and Jane Austen will bear the tenth reading; the magazine shocker will have lost ground at the second and be unendurable at the third. And, if I dare to speak of music of which I know very little, I suspect that *The Merry Widow* will have become a torture and the Mozart a delight. I believe this test to be practically infallible and of almost universal application. Provided that is that the person who applies it has the ordinary faculties. There are a few people who are incapable of perceiving what we mean by poetry or art: or are like the late Dean Stanley who could not be got to distinguish ‘God save the Queen’ from ‘Tommy, make room for your uncle’ which was a popular vulgarity of his old age and my childhood. With such people we are obviously not concerned. A man who has no legs cannot be used to test the effects of walking on the muscles. But I believe that all people of ordinary æsthetic capacity, even the most modest, can prove to themselves the reality of æsthetic judgements by the application of this simple test.

If so, we have for practical purposes an infallible hallmark distinguishing fine work in the arts from work which is mediocre, poor, or actually bad. The test is repetition. The *Paradise Lost* and *Lear*

and the Fifth Symphony seem fuller of content, power, and beauty at each new reading or hearing. The pleasure and admiration often at first aroused by inferior work gradually evaporates till it disappears in indifference or disgust. Of course, such a test cannot claim to produce results of scientific precision or uniformity. The response to it will be slower or quicker in proportion to a man's natural turn for these things, and to the extent of his experience in them. But with those who have such a turn at all it will never fail altogether. And like other human powers it will grow as it has more opportunities and is more used. And this fact—that it grows as opportunities are enlarged—is the answer to objections sometimes made to resting our assurance upon it. Lord Balfour, for instance (to quote him once more), supports his anarchical conclusions by asserting that a schoolboy gets as much 'æsthetic emotion' out of reading some very ordinary tale of adventure as the finest lover of poetry gets out of Homer. But does he? Can that be called 'æsthetic emotion' which is, generally speaking, a mere eagerness of curiosity to know how the story ends? And even if it could, what would it prove? Why should a boy's pleasure in Harrison Ainsworth, or whoever is to-day the most popular master of the story of crime and adventure, make these exciting romancers the equals of Homer, any more than a boy's pleasure in mastering the mysteries of simple division can make simple division as great a business as the binomial theorem? A better case could perhaps be made out of the pleasure—one of an undoubtedly æsthetic nature—which most of us have at one time or another taken in verse which we can now see to be rhetorical or cheap. But here again the answer is ready. The test of repetition is fatal. The boy's story-book becomes tedious and Homer does not. The *Giaour* comes to ring hollow and thin, and Homer rings even richer and stronger at each successive reading. The boy's judgement has neither the maturity of development nor the variety of experience which can alone give value. Both the faculty which judges and the material on which judgement is formed are in a boy necessarily deficient or incomplete. The same answer seems good against the suggestion, also thrown out by Lord Balfour, that the crudity of opinion sometimes shown by a nation in its youth disproves the reality of æsthetic judgements. He urges that the comparative triviality of Greek music, coupled with the extraordinary enthusiasm felt about it by so richly gifted a people, is evidence of the impossibility of proving that any general agreement on these subjects exists among 'men of trained sensibility'; 'for, no one can seriously suppose that if he were suddenly transported to the Athens of Phidias and Sophocles he would count the Greek

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nature to walk on. And though I have not tried to give, and could not have given if I had tried, any philosophic reasons for this profoundly entertained conviction, I have tried to suggest that it does not leave itself altogether without witness, and that we can assure ourselves of its truth, if not metaphysically, yet at least, if I may so put it, empirically. For my part I do not think that we can afford to wait—however much we may value it when it comes—for that mystical or theological reassurance by which Lord Balfour rebuilds, as it were, his shattered world of æsthetic values. We cannot submit to be deprived of our sense of a reality, at once present now to us and potentially present to all the world, in the experiences which have meant and mean so much to us. We cannot do without the belief that what seems so great to us would equally seem great to all if they had time and opportunity to let it work upon them. No doubt the men who have that in them which is quickly and powerfully moved by art and poetry are fewer than those, for instance, who are so moved by religion. But they are much more numerous than those who are greatly moved by science or philosophy. And, in any case, numbers do not affect the issue. We cannot but claim that art and poetry, however few may be their faithful, have the right and duty of refusing any admission of anarchy into their ranks: the right of claiming for the articles of their faith, as the Church has always claimed for hers, that, if fitly and truly presented, they will be believed *semper et ubique et ab omnibus*, everywhere and at all times and by all men.

THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

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The Idea of an English Association

By

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THE IDEA OF AN ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

A PRELUDE

IT is told of Admiral Collingwood that, when he was at home on leave in 1802, he used to walk about his Northumbrian estate with a bag of acorns, planting one in every suitable spot, in order that the England of a hundred years later might not lack timber for building men-of-war. When the next great war came upon us in 1914 the oak was no longer the material of battleships; but it had a new and hardly less important use, for there was a stage in the naval campaign when the necessary supply of pitprops for our mines could no longer be imported from Norway.

This is no singular story—it has many parallels. We say commonly of a successful enterprise that its founders builded better than they knew; and in so saying we do not merely record their good luck, we offer a tribute of praise and admiration, and the tribute is deserved. There is always a veil over the future—no one can foresee what fate is in store for his foundation. But he may well be satisfied, and we may well praise him, if we live long enough to be sure that what he has created is a living thing rather than any kind of building; since it is generally to living things rather than to buildings that new possibilities present themselves.

You will guess of what enterprise, of what foundation I am thinking. It is twenty-one years ago since I was invited to join with a few others—of whom I think Lord Erle, his brother Sir George Prothero, and Professor Andrew Bradley were the leaders—in the setting on foot of a new society, to be called The English Association. The original suggestion, as I understood, had come from several members of the teaching profession who desired to establish some kind of fellowship among themselves and at the same time to get into touch with the world of English letters. I do not remember that in the preliminary discussions any very definite Articles of Association were proposed or adopted: the movement was a true movement—that is to say, it made no attempt to assume the form of an Institution, but was content to start from an instinctive common feeling and to march in the direction of the horizon. Looking back we can now see that we had certain points in view: to promote English scholarship, to raise the standard of education and especially of self-education, to increase our membership to the utmost, and to recruit it from the whole

British Commonwealth. Of the rapid advance of the Association towards these three objectives there is no need for me to say anything; but there remains a fourth aim, that desire for fellowship and for a wider and more immediate touch with contemporary English writers and critics, which was perhaps the very central germ of our acorn of twenty-one years ago.

It has not in these years been forgotten or unproductive—in many centres all over the country, in the Dominions, and especially in our annual general meetings in London, we have spent many happy and profitable hours. Nothing here has been wasted, nothing lost, but the very success of our Association has suggested to me a question, a doubt whether we have yet realized our advance and its meaning, whether we have not perhaps accepted the social side of our activities as a mere matter of procedure. I have to-day the opportunity of putting this question to you: I have been asking myself, and I now ask you, whether the true idea of an English Association, that which it was to be, has not been waiting to reveal itself at the fateful moment, the moment of a great national need, which no other agency is at the present time capable of satisfying, because no other has the same wide acceptability or the same unexhausted impetus.

No one will deny that there is this national need: we are all too frequently reminded that we have suffered a change, we have lost our old world and have not yet made a tolerable new one. There may be some among us who hope for a restoration, a rebuilding, as it were, after a bombardment. If such a restoration were possible, in the nature of things, which I feel sure it is not, the first question we should have to ask ourselves would be whether there has been in our recent social history any age so golden that we should be doing well in returning to it. The causes of our present discontent lie farther back than we generally suppose: the gulf between the old England and the new was not cleft by the war of 1914 to 1918, but by the French Revolution and the war of 1793 to 1815. I believe that we shall not be far wrong if we attribute the chaotic social conditions of to-day to a wrong turn taken in the early years of the nineteenth century. Among the ruling class at that time the knowledge of the Classics, the interest in English poetry, the command of a fine English prose, were common enough to be hardly noted as graces, and when Wordsworth complained that the education of his day was a tissue of mere 'formalities', in strong contrast with 'the passions of mankind . . . the depth of human souls . . . real feeling and just sense' he was thinking of the growing poverty of the Grammar-school

education, and forgetting the high standard attained by the one class which could be said to have received any real education at all. We have interesting glimpses of the truth in the too-small volume of *Recollections* by Samuel Rogers, in which the poet or banker, as you please to classify him, records in brief notes his conversations with men more highly placed and infinitely more distinguished than himself. The talk turned two or three times on Homer, and the opinion of Charles James Fox is thus reported: 'Homer—the interview between Priam and Achilles his finest passage. . . . None more mistaken than those who think Homer has no delicacy—he is full of it. Did Penelope *never* name Troy? He had remarked that delicacy, and also her not mentioning Ulysses by name.' Again, 'Homer almost always speaks well of women'; and again, 'Nausicaa exquisite: better than anything'. Farther on we find Henry Grattan remarking on another occasion, 'Priam very well bred—especially towards Helen'.

These opinions, with the passages which justify them, would furnish material for an essay much longer than this, and directed to a different point. My argument to-day is concerned not with Homer but with his readers. Let me remind you for a moment of Fox's preference—the scene between Priam and Achilles, the scene in which the aged Trojan king goes, without escort or truce, to the camp of that enemy who has slain his most loved son. He goes to beg humbly that he may ransom the dead body and give it burial. He clasps the knees of Achilles in accordance with the ritual for suppliants, and entreats him in these words: 'O godlike Achilles, remember thy father that is of like years with me on the grievous pathway of old age. Him it may be the dwellers round about are entreating evilly, nor is there any to ward off ruin and destruction from him. Nevertheless while he heareth of thee as yet alive he rejoiceth in his heart and hopeth day after day that he shall see his dear son returning from Troyland. But I, I am utterly unblest, since of all my sons him who was yet left and guarded city and men, him, even Hector, thou slewest but now, as he was fighting for his country. For his sake I come unto the ships of the Achaians that I may win him back from thee, and I bring with me untold ransom. Fear thou the gods, Achilles, and have compassion on me, even me, bethinking thee of thy father. See, I am more piteous than he is, and I have braved what no other man on earth hath braved before, to stretch forth my hand toward the face of the slayer of my sons.'

'Thus spake he, and stirred within Achilles desire to make lament for his own father. And he touched the old man's hand and gently

moved him back.' Then we are told how they both bethought them of their dead, and how Priam wept for his son and Achilles for his father. Then the great captain gathers himself up and speaks of the sadness of life, and he tells the old man to keep courage and lament not unabatingly in his heart, bidding him to a seat. Priam is still not sure whether his petition is accepted: nothing has yet been said of giving back the dead: he must be braver yet. 'Bid me not to a seat', he says, 'so long as Hector lieth uncared for, but straightway give him back that I may behold him with mine eyes. . . .' Then fleet-footed Achilles looked sternly upon him and said, 'Chafe me no longer, old sire: of myself am I minded to give Hector back to thee. . . . Therefore now stir my heart no more amid my troubles, lest I leave not even thee in peace . . . although thou art my suppliant, and lest I transgress the commandment of Zeus.'

After this outburst—a strangely natural touch it seems even to-day, after three thousand years—Achilles returns to his courtesy and generosity. But though the old man sups with his terrible host, he escapes before daybreak with that which he came to ransom.

You will agree, I think, that such a piece of work, the work of such a poet as this, could not possibly have been included among 'those formalities' of which Wordsworth spoke so contemptuously: nothing could bear more directly upon the passions of mankind and the depth of human souls. It was not, then, the Classics as known to men like Fox and Grattan that Wordsworth proposed to strike out from his scheme of education: what he banned was the weary work among the 'grammatical flats and shallows' by which alone the freedom of the Classic lands could be attained. No mind can be ennobled by the rudiments of Latin and Greek: yet to get beyond these is impossible for the multitude; therefore, in the common view of that time, *they* must remain without education of the only kind which is desirable for its own sake—that which gives high ideals, personal and political, a quick sense of justice, of sympathy, and of pity, a habit of generous admiration, a perpetual remembrance of the respect due to others as well as to oneself, and consequently, as we have seen, a keen normal perception of the delicacy with which these habits and traits are exhibited in great literature. Wordsworth thought that the humanities—the studies which give experience of human life, delicacy of feeling, and habitual courtesy of speech—could be achieved by sympathetic intercourse with every passer-by on the highway, and by acquaintance with the Great Nature exhibited

in the works of mighty poets. In this I believe he came nearer to the truth than any Englishman of his time—nearer to the right turn when every one of his contemporaries was taking the wrong one. What a pleasure it would be to put the clock back, to meet Fox as Rogers met him, and to question him with the full certainty of a frank and genial answer! 'Are you, Sir, of the opinion of the people whom Mr. Locke quotes, that "these are the learned languages, fit only for learned men to meddle with and teach?"—that English is the language of the illiterate vulgar?'

'Why no,' Fox would reply, 'that is stark nonsense, for English was used by Milton in his *Paradise Lost*, where Satan is very well bred: and so in general is Milton himself, excepting it may be a passage in Samson, and another on the *Paradise of Fools*.'

Here is our opportunity for a crucial question. 'Then, Sir, if Milton has the same qualities as Homer, might we not do well to use him and others like him in place of an author so fenced off from us by years of Greek syntax and irregular verbs?'

To this an answer comes in a less audible voice, which may or may not be that of Fox. 'You were speaking of the learned and of what is well bred in notable authors. I do not know that learning and good breeding need be any concern of those who work with their hands—give them freedom and a good wage, they have all the breeding, I believe, that can be to their advantage.'

'To their advantage, no, no, Sir, nor to ours, do you think?'

But the conversation is over: the clock has been put on again. We are left to muse on the disconcerting fact that men of the age which Fox adorned came so near to the right road, and yet went aside from it, leading astray four generations of Englishmen and wasting more than a century of effort. They recognized what was a fine means of education; but they believed it to be a useless luxury for all but rich men of a restricted class, because they took education to have a different meaning for different classes, and the class divisions of their day they thought to be natural and perpetual. Conditions of life, and political rights, might be and must be altered for the better, but no one had yet conceived the idea of a socially undivided nation.

Now I am not suggesting that in 1805 any one could have been expected to propose a liberal education for the whole people, based on the masterpieces of English literature. That would have needed some general interest in education, leading to some action by the legislature. But ministers were at that time in the long-drawn agony of a world war and hard put to it to find the means of carrying it on. It was not until 1833 that the House of Commons

voted for the first time a small grant for education. What I am regretting is that neither the course nor the consequences of nineteenth-century politics were clearly foreseen or provided for. The period was in many ways an admirable one, and did not merit the lofty contempt with which some of the Epigoni now look down upon it. It is enough to remember that it brought forth giants and carried on great traditions, both in the arts and sciences. But in politics it was an improvised and ill-organized experiment: it progressed with alternate rashness and restraint on generally liberalizing principles, now and again enlarging the franchise in the hope, sometimes faint, sometimes fanatical, that education would advance more rapidly than the birth-rate. Education did advance, but it advanced by the wrong road and carried with it not unity but a growing danger of disunion, till at last peace was only possible at all so long as the national prosperity kept pace with the national appetite. For this kind of progress the natural end was waiting: the manual workers grew in voting power, their interests began to take the first place, their burden of taxation was lightened at the expense of the rich. The change was well borne at first, for opinion admitted the justice of the new arrangements. But after a time some began to doubt whether the main object of this vicarious generosity was not the political support of the all-powerful majority, rather than the welfare of the community considered as a whole. A new bitterness was imported into party struggles when it first became plausible to attribute success at the polls to the efficacy of what was openly called national bribery. Even this was in time forgotten, and in the great war heavy sacrifices were endured without a murmur by men who had never before been considered rich enough to be worth plucking. Then came the propaganda of the new Russian political system, under the influence of which there was to be heard up and down the country so much talk of confiscation and the class war that it was thought by some worth while to try the experiment in earnest. Even that, even the memory of our nine days' Civil War is rapidly fading into the twilight of history; but it remains true for the present that we are no longer in any sense a nation at peace within itself.

I beg you to mark that in this brief retrospect I am reviewing from no partisan standpoint the developments I have mentioned. They were as much the effects of their causes as other events in our history, and have so far no appearance of being fatal. What I do regret and desire to remedy is the social disunion which threatens us. For a long time past and—up to a certain time—in

a growing degree, we who live in England have been able to count on the general temper and habit of mind of the whole people, as expressed in our social life. We have had a common culture, rudimentary but really national. A distinguished German politician, writing soon after the war and therefore not likely to be prejudiced in our favour, in reviewing the nations gave this account of our distinctive character: 'The final judgement of the British in the affairs of life is "this is English", "that is not English". Foreign lands are a subject of geographical and ethnological study. The whole mighty will of a nation is here concentrated in the form of civilizing political energy. Every private inclination is a fad, and even fads have their fixed forms. An offence against table manners is banned like an attack on the Church. Nature is mastered with consideration and intelligence, whether the problem is the breeding of sheep or the ruling of India.' And in another passage he speaks of the influence of the English on culture as having been surpassed by none.

It is a flattering account, but its meaning is perhaps less favourable than it seems on a first reading. Seven years ago I accepted it with pleasure, but I have since had time and good cause to reconsider it. Who are the English of whom Walther Rathenau is speaking, and upon whose culture has their great influence been concentrated? It is true that the social forms and the political ideas of other nations have been influenced by ours, -as ours in past centuries have been influenced by those of France, Italy, or Spain. We may be glad to hear this acknowledged, but we would rather have been shown by a credible witness that we had concentrated our national will on civilizing political energy at home, in our own islands.

Are we doing so now? Are we still in a position to make the attempt? Let us remember to begin with that our concentration can be at best only a partial one: there are now intellectual forces at work in the country which aim at superseding our present national culture, and not at preserving or civilizing it. I might come to agree with them if I believed that our native culture must always remain in great part the possession and influence of a single class or a small minority. But to-day I speak in the faith that this is not so: in the faith that the national culture should be, and in good time may be, the tradition and inheritance of all British men and women who care to receive it. I put before you no hope of securing a general equality in wealth or health, in intellect or physique or in any other of the circumstances of a varying world; but I ask you to hope with me for a national fellowship in which

it shall be possible for every one to forget the existence of classes and to find a personal interest in each other's circumstances and events.

You will expect me, after speaking of hopes and faith, to say something more practical before I conclude. First, then, I would remind you that though we are not as well off or as far advanced as we might have been if the men of 1805 had had a different *conception of the meaning and possibilities of education*, still we have this advantage, that we have had our eyes opened and know what it is that we need and where it is to be obtained. We are no longer under the belief that education is an entirely different thing for men who live in different circumstances; because we have realized that education is not merely a preparation for individual life, but a training for social life, life in a nation, where the great main interests of all are the same. I say confidently that we have realized this, because your Association had a preponderant share in bringing about a record and a report of this realization some seven years ago. The report declared the necessity of what must be, in however elementary a form, a liberal education for all English children, whatever their position or occupation in life: that on all the evidence available an education of this kind is the greatest benefit which could be conferred on any citizen of a great state, and that the common right to it, the common discipline and enjoyment of it, the common tastes and associations connected with it, would form a new element of national unity, linking together the mental life of all classes by experiences which have hitherto been the privilege of a limited section.

Further, the report anticipated that if we use English literature as a means of contact with great minds, as a channel by which to draw upon their experience with profit and delight, and as a bond of sympathy between the members of a human society, we shall succeed, as the best teachers of the Classics have often succeeded, in their more limited field.

Since the words which I have just quoted were written, only seven years have passed, and the time therefore for decisive results has not yet come. The signs so far are favourable, but in these seven years there have also been signs of unfavourable influences. These, however, are, in one way or another, connected with politics, and though the whole subject now engaging us is in the true sense of the word political, as concerned with the life of the State, our first care, the care of every good citizen, must be to keep education safe from *party* politics, which would be likely to bring it death rather than life. We have only to remember that

in vital matters it is the welfare of all that we are aiming at, and the fellowship of all, whether they agree with us or disagree in the political field.

But again we must remember that even if all goes as well as we can hope, it will be long before that which the children are now receiving at school will seriously affect the social life of the nation. The really practical question for us is, what can we do immediately? This is a doubly important matter, for the more quickly we can get forward with the creation of a new adult society, the better will be the effect on the children of the new education when their time comes to join it.

At this point I think we may usefully warn each other—though there can be few of us ignorant of the fact—that the young generations now and hereafter leaving school will not come to us asking or even tolerating advice or guidance. The new society will not be formed on a paternal, a charitable, or even a philanthropic basis. It must be a community first desired and afterwards valued, for its own sake, for the pleasures it offers and the self-development and self-confidence which it confers. Whatever the young may think, no man can stand alone in the world: the more friends he has the stronger he will feel, and the more of them he understands the more he will discover about himself. As to the pleasures I feel my hopes firmly based; for holding audiences of almost every kind I have had reason to note that ‘the passions of mankind, real feeling and just sense’, have not yet lost their power. Even ‘the pictures’ do not please without some touches of reality, some stirring of that which is not mere sensation. The Englishman is a great moralizer, and a great man of feeling. I should expect the scene between Priam and Achilles, well read and with a slight introduction, to be perfectly to the taste of any audience in town or country who had no reason to suspect that they were being given something for their good.

About the form and name of the new society—if it is to have either form or name—I have thought a good deal during the last five years. Sometimes I have wondered whether we might be infringing the patent of the Freemasons, and I remember once waking from a nightmare dream that I had been convicted of conspiring to found a new kind of University. That dream was not due, I believe, to a complex of any kind, but to my having chanced upon some verses by the poet Gower—they were written in fourteenth-century French and they begin with the suggestive line ‘A l’université de tout le monde’, which I take to be the equivalent of ‘To the Everyman University’. Such a name does

indeed combine well with the secret method of one of our own universities, as revealed to us by Stephen Leacock in his *Discovery of England*. He says that the key to the mystery of an Oxford education is to be found in the operations of the person called the tutor, but that it is in fact a communal process. 'It is from him (the tutor), or rather with him, that the students learn all that they know. . . . What an Oxford tutor does is to get a little group of students together and smoke at them. Men who have been smoked at for four years turn into ripe scholars.' This is a true picture, and nothing could be more apt for an illustration of our idea—the idea of a ripeness brought about by constant friendly leisurely intercourse: exactly the ripeness which we so admire in the age of Fox and Pitt, and so grievously miss in this age of perpetual motion. But the typical modern university is not wholly described in Leacock's brilliant discovery: it is always an Institution, and one whose ripening process is limited to four years at most. Even the name has lost its truth in the course of centuries: it may once have promised some kind of universality, but it now connotes specialism, competitive examinations, and the inability to take in all who wish to enter.

The result is that I think we must add neither a new name nor a new institution to those already existing: the new society must come about by the extension of one which is already in existence and in whose original idea this particular extension was always implicit. The English Association was not designed to be a teaching corporation, an examination board, or a set of hostels for students taking a four-year course. If it is less than a university in these and other respects, it yet attempts as seriously to promote humane studies, and it has two great additional advantages—it offers its members a lifelong course and unlimited freedom of entrance. Finally, and this is the vital point, it is in no way limited by class associations. It is only natural that the ripening process, the humane education sought by Wordsworth, should advance more rapidly when there is no cloud of formality over the everyday sun, not even the chill early mist of first acquaintance. To visit a branch of the Association in a distant town has often reminded a visitor of the sociability of one of the Dominions, where hospitality is unshackled by caution or self-consciousness. And if thanks have been offered to such a visitor, how often it has happened that he has felt himself to be the debtor rather than the creditor in the experience!

These are real pleasures and real profits of which I have been speaking—they are a kind of trade in which both sides are left

with a balance of advantage. How this trade can best be fostered within its own frontiers the English Association already knows; and will therefore best know how to extend its operations over the whole English territory. All that I can do now is to remind you urgently of the need, which is pressing, and the power, of which you must already be conscious. I ask you for help to devise and put in operation a scheme under which your Association would ally itself with all those men and women in every neighbourhood who have grasped the fact of to-day—the salient fact that the present frame of society is wholly inadequate to find place for all who are able to create and worthy to enjoy an unembarrassed sense of national unity.

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Colloquial Language of
the Commonwealth and
Restoration

BY

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COLLOQUIAL LANGUAGE OF THE COMMONWEALTH AND RESTORATION

A STUDY of the Personal Letters and Private Diaries of this period, undertaken with a view to research into its mental outlook, revealed linguistic points which seemed too valuable to be neglected. They are therefore collected here. They have been drawn from both published and manuscript sources, a list of which is given at the end for purposes of reference.¹ In the selection of sources from the immense mass of correspondence of the time, the intimate and personal has been chosen in preference to the letters of business or state. Personal Letters and Private Diaries are invaluable as a source of information on the colloquial language of any given period. Simple, vigorous and unadorned, they are our nearest approach to everyday speech as practised by those who wrote not for fame nor with any suspicion of the prying eyes of posterity, but from the necessity of finding straightforward expression for feelings, opinions, or daily happenings. Modern authority has it that in the early Stuart age

few men and women . . . sat down to write a letter without the desire of leaving it, when done, a finished production in the way of style.²

But this legacy of the Elizabethan age had, by 1640, lost much of its force, and indeed as early as 1625 Howell can declare:

we should write as we speak, and that's a true familiar letter which expresseth one's mind, as if he were discoursing with the party to whom he writes in succinct and short terms. The tongue and the pen are both of them interpreters of the mind, but I hold the pen to be the more faithful of the two.³

Such a statement is not altogether consistent with Howell's own letters, which seem to aim rather at literary polish and ornament than at the effect of conversational familiarity. Further testimony to the prevalence of his professed opinion, however, is given a quarter of a century later by Dorothy Osborne, who, humorously condemning a letter of her own, remarks:

there are many pretty things shuffled together which would do better

¹ *Note.* The foot-note references are in each case to the edition mentioned in the Bibliography, unless a different edition is explicitly named. Two slightly different editions of the *Verney Memoirs* have been used, and therefore in each reference to this work the date of the edition used is given.

² *Camb. Hist. of Eng. Lit.*, vol. vii, pp. 188-9.

³ *Howell*, ed. Repplier, vol. i, p. 1.

spoken than in a letter, notwithstanding the received opinion that people ought to write as they speak (which in some sense I think is true).¹

Ten years later a certain Dorothy Turner in a judicious little letter gives expression to a somewhat similar opinion:

Deare sister,

I take it very kindly as a great evidence of your love to me that you so suddenly answered my unworthy lines. I know not how it is with others but I for my part highly prize those lines that express affection though ther be nothing of news nor Rethorick, such are mine and I hope will find favour with you only on this score of true and hearty love. I have not as yet had any cause from you to doubt the contrary.²

Dorothy Turner's scope may seem narrow, but she had grasped the secret of all good letter-writing, that it must be based on intimate friendliness or affection between the correspondents. Many of the Letters studied have a wider interest than that attaching to the simple expression of 'true and hearty love'. Some have a political value; some are interesting as models of style. But in all, the personal element is the informing spirit, and gives its character to the whole. As a late nineteenth-century critic has put it: 'The basis of style is intellectual and moral education; its superstructure is individuality; and neither the one nor the other is inconsistent with the artlessness which epistolary success demands.'³

The Diaries, though slightly more formal in origin and method, share in this invaluable artlessness. Some, like those of Pepys or the Cavalier diarist, Richard Symonds, are simple jottings of passing events; some are collected reminiscences, such as that of the country squire Sir John Bramston; some pure autobiography, such as those of Lady Halkett and the great Chancellor. But even Clarendon's, probably the least personal of all those studied, in the sense that it deals with historic events from the point of view of an active participator in them, has the intimate touch. He writes to defend his own character and to provide an interest for himself in the monotony of exile, and he deals in even greater detail with distinctly private family matters, with his friendships and his interests, than with State affairs. The *Memoirs* of Lady Fanshawe are a personal biography, addressed to her only surviving son; while the *Diary* of Lady Warwick is a purely private record of self-examination.

The Letters and Diaries show a love of figurative speech. What to the modern mind would appear as affectation, to the seventeenth-century mind seems to have been the normal mode of

¹ *Letters of Dorothy Osborne*, p. 225.

² Add. MS. 11314. Letter to Mrs. Elizabeth Martyn.

³ D. R. Rannic, *Letter-Writing as a Form of Literature*, p. 6.

expression. A twist of thought gives to a simple statement a metaphorical glamour, which is intended to enrich both thought and style. In some cases the process is too deliberate and an over-elaborate artificiality is the result. Sympathy for a friend in sickness loses its genuine force when thus expressed:

As Cowards my Lord dar not open their Eyes till y^e danger be past,
I durst not soe much as enquire after your Health till I heard of y^r
Recoverie.¹

A Mr. T. Rosse sends an absent friend the following description of his life in England:

As to my selfe I live the same hermit's life you left mee in, and exposed to the foxes of the wilderness who are still devouring my little branches, but I endeavour to defend myself with a weapon which they always wanted, which is honesty, an exorcisme against all their devills that befriend them must submitt to.²

This intricacy of language probably pleased the writer with a sense of ingenuity, while the confusion of metaphor passed unnoticed, but the complaint lacks the vigour of spontaneity. Less obtrusive, but illustrative of the same tendency, is Francis Cornwallis's protestation to Sir Kenelm Digby that he would ere this have visited him

but that some affaires (the devill my great Enemy will e're be venting his Malevolincy) has perpetually intervened, and the greatest Malice he can e're shew (but I hope to fortifie myself by growing daily a better Christian then he takes me to be) will be to sow tares in that friendship (w^{ch} I reckon upon, as one of my cheefest happinesses) that I've wth you.³

This sentence is also an example of the seventeenth-century love of parenthesis which often results in harshness of style and obscurity of sense, and to these points we shall return. More elaborately sustained than the metaphor of the last-quoted extract, yet much more effective, is Sir Thomas Player's humorous description of the English Government in 1673:

The truth is, this yeare the Government begins to thrive marvellous well, for it eats and drinks and sleeps as heartily as I have knowne it, nor doth it vex and disquiet itselfe with that foolish, idle, impertinent thing called businesse.⁴

This image evidently pleased the writer for in his next letter six weeks later he carries it on:

In my last I thinke I acquainted your Ex^{cye} that the government of London was asleepe, and in a deepe one, for it is not yet awake; the truth is 'tis soe quiett 'tis pittie to awake it.⁵

¹ Reresby to Halifax. Foxcroft, vol. i, p. 123.

² *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. i, p. 155.

⁴ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. i, p. 133.

⁵ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. ii, p. 161.

³ Add. MS. 38175.

Halifax is another exponent of the metaphorical style, which in his hands seldom fails of effectiveness and never degenerates into mere verbal ingenuity. In his *Advice to a Daughter*, written with some regard to literary qualities, passages such as the following constantly arrest the attention and drive home his lucid reasoning:

A virtue stuck with bristles is too rough for this age; it must be adorned with some flowers or else it will be unwillingly entertained, so that even where it may be fit to strike, do it like a lady, gently.¹

To ridicule the world

is like throwing snowballs against Bullets.²

If friends are chosen unwisely,

it is like our houses being in the power of a drunken or careless neighbour; only so much worse as that there will be no Insurance here to make you amends, as there is in the case of fire.³

The same tendency appears in the private letters of Halifax. Referring to his unpopularity in Parliament in 1681, he tells his brother:

I must venture to go into the storm, and receive the shot once more of an angry House of Commons, unless they should by a miracle grow into a better temper than is naturally expected from them.⁴

This habit of thought and expression is typical of women as well as men. The simple acknowledgement of a service done is phrased thus by Grace Bokenham, sister of Sir Simonds D'Ewes:

Gladly would I expres more then paper expressions of arye thinne acknowledgements for so ponderous a benefit.⁵

Lucy Hutchinson in her grief for her dead husband slips naturally into a metaphorical strain:

if our tears did not put out our eyes we should see him even in heaven, holding forth his flaming lamp of virtuous examples and precepts, to light us through the dark world.⁶

Lady Fanshawe records the death of her husband in language strikingly simple :

On the $\frac{15^{th}}{25}$, being Tuesday, my husband was taken ill with an ague, but turned to a malignant inward fever, of which he lay until the 26th of the same month, being Sunday, until eleven of the Clock at night, and then departed this life, fifteen days before his intended journey to England.⁷

¹ Halifax, *Advice to a Daughter*, p. 131.

² *Ibid.*, p. 127.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 124.

⁴ Foxcroft, *Life and Letters*, vol. ii, p. 277.

⁵ Harl. MS. 382, p. 148.

⁷ *Memoirs*, p. 218.

⁶ *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson*, p. 18.

But her lament for Charles I, while expressing a sorrow obviously genuine and deep, is phrased in awkward metaphor:

Thus did we part from that glorious sun, that within a few months after was murdered, to the grief of all Christians that were not forsaken by God.¹

It is interesting to notice the prevalence of metaphorical phrases, most of which are in use in our own day, but some of which have undergone modification. It will be convenient to summarize the evidence on this point by tabulating the most striking examples collected. In certain cases it will be noted that the example is of an earlier date than the first instance of it given in the *New English Dictionary*.

A. *Phrases identical with those of the present day.*

To be even with. 'I shall *be even with* you for your short letter.'
Dorothy Osborne, p. 243, c. 1654.

Young men during the Commonwealth were
'too impatient to revenge their death, or to
be even with their oppressors'.

Clarendon, *Life (Continuation)*, p. 15, 1672.

The face to. 'It will never enter into my head that 'tis
possible any woman should love where she
is not first loved, and much less that if they
should do that, they could have *the face to*
own it.' Dorothy Osborne, p. 208, c. 1654.
Cp. "'Twas hard for me now to have *the face to*
pray to this Christ for mercy, against whom
I had thus vilely sinned.'

Bunyan, *Grace Abounding*, p. 77. [Cassell, 1887.]

A feather in one's cap. '*A feather in my cap*, a warrant to be sworn in
ordinary with a Reserve of my Priority and
Seniority.'

Verney Memoirs, vol. iv, p. 7 (1892), 1661.

Featherone's nest. 'I perceive, as he told me, were it not that
Mr. Coventry had already *feathered his nest*
in selling of places, he do like him very well.'

Pepys, 7 June 1662.

Have by the ears. 'I doubt Mun will *have him by the ears* . . . and
I doubt be the death of him.'

Verney Memoirs, vol. ii, p. 332 (1892), 1648.

¹ Ibid., p. 76.

- For Gospel. 'This I dare not asseme for *gospel*.'
Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson, vol. i, p. 73, 1673.
 [N.E.D. First example identical with this is 1678.]
- Into the bargain. The carrier 'framed a fine Lye *into the bargain*'.
Verney Memoirs, vol. iv, p. 195 (1892), c. 1668.
 [N.E.D. Only example 1674, and meaning there is not altogether metaphorical. 'He paid much too dear for his wife's fortune, by taking her person *into the bargain*.'
 One example (1636) with 'to' instead of 'into', but again not wholly metaphorical.]
- Kick at. 'I . . . proposed Lord Halifax as one of the Lords, whom the King . . . indeed *kicked at*, in our first consultation, more than any of the rest.' Foxcroft, vol. i, pp. 146-7, 1679.
- Long home. Twysden's shortness of breath reminds him daily 'of my *long home*'. MS. Letters, 1665.
- Nose out of joint. Of the new Queen, men say 'that the King is pleased enough with her, which, I fear, will put Madam Castlemaine's *nose out of joynt*'.
 Pepys, 31 May 1662.
- Peck of troubles. 'The poor man is delivered out of a *peck of troubles*.'
 Lady Russell, p. 42, 1679.
- Pullinone's horns. 'The Bishop and the Colonel *pulled in their horns*.'
 Prideaux, p. 74, 1679.
- Save one's bacon. Highwayman Hals thinks his last reprieve may 'still *save my bacon*'.
Verney Memoirs, vol. iv, p. 312 (1892), 1675.
 [N.E.D. First example 1691.]
- Smell a rat. 'I *smell a rat*.'
Diary of Henry Sidney, p. 87, 1679.
- Tooth and nail. Edmund Verney is '*tooth and nayle* for the King's cause'.
Verney Memoirs, vol. ii, p. 137 (1892), 1643.
- Under the rose. '*Under the rose* be it spoken.'
Verney Memoirs, vol. i, p. 233 (1892), 1636.
 '*Under the rose* I have noe faith in Rump Major.'
Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 469 (1892), 1660.

- Upon thorns. 'Thus *upon thorns* he stayed.'
Lady Fanshawe, p. 74, 1676.
- Virtue of necessity. 'to suffer patiently what is imposed, making a
virtue of necessity.'
Dorothy Osborne, p. 213, c. 1654.
- White boy. 'one of her *white boyes*.'
Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 146 (1892), 1650.
- Will for the deed. 'Accept of *the will for the deed*.'
Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 41, 1679.
- With a vengeance. A process 'will make him bring in his mony
with a vengeance'.
Prideaux, p. 5, 1674.

B. *Phrases which have undergone modification.*

- Truc colours. 'He had formerly made Secretary Windebank
appear in *his colours*.'
Lady Fanshawe, p. 61, 1676.
[*N.E.D.* Only one example identical with this,
1688.]
- In all conscience. 'the King neglects the Duke of Monmouth
enough of *all conscience*.'
Diary of Henry Sidney, p. 207, 1679.
- Ears burn. Temple having been the subject of conversation: 'Sure, if there be any truth in the old
observation, your *cheeks* glowed notably.'
Dorothy Osborne, p. 159, c. 1653.
[*N.E.D.* No example.]
- Play the fool. Ralph has '*played the bird called the goose*.'
Verney Memoirs, vol. ii, p. 221 (1892) 1644.
[*N.E.D.* One example almost identical with
this, 1655.]
- Take to one's heels. Lady Shrewsbury 'took her heels'.
Savile Correspondence, p. 22, 1667.

The very general use of proverbs in familiar correspondence is a remarkable feature of the period. It gives force and point to the letters and probably derives from the same source as the taste for metaphorical expression. Again the evidence will be summarized under two headings, the collection of proverbs differing from their modern form being best grouped apart. Two interesting proverbs make their appearance, one forty years and the other a century and a half earlier than the first examples recorded in the *New English Dictionary*.

A. *Proverbs identical with modern form.*

Ill news flies fast. 'I was asfear'd of every letter I received, knowing that *ill newes flys fast* from all hands wher soe many have a Concerne.'

Foxcroft, vol. i, p. 123, 1675.

[*N.E.D.* First example 1821.]

The moon is made 'the ☽¹ *was made of green cheese*.'

of green cheese. *Verney Memoirs*, vol. iii, p. 451 (1892), 1659.

Out of the frying 'They fell out of the frying pan into the fire.'

pan into the fire. Hodgson, p. 136, 1683.

Roland for an 'There's a Rowland for your Oliver.'

Oliver. *Verney Memoirs*, vol. iii, p. 207 (1892), 1656.

[*N.E.D.* First example identical with this is

1696, and thereafter always in this form.

First example given is in reverse order 'an Oliver for a Roland' (1612).]

B. *Proverbs identical with modern meaning, but differing from modern form.*

Birds of a feather 'Remember the proverb—*such as his company is,*
flock together. *such is the man.*' Lady Fanshawe, p. 34, 1676.

Finger in every 'an Oar in every Boat'.

pie. Slingsby, *Father's Legacy*, p. 209, 1658.

It's a long lane 'He goeth far that never turnes.'

that has no turning. *Verney Memoirs*, vol. iii, p. 151 (1892), 1653.

'Never long that comes at last.'

Teonge, p. 265, 1678.

More haste worse 'Our haste brought us woe.'

speed. Lady Fanshawe, p. 98, 1676.

Out of sight out 'Out of the roade out of the world.'

of mind. *Verney Memoirs*, vol. i, p. 199 (1925), 1640.

Take time by the 'Now sedition was ripe, and they took occasion
forelock. by the forelock.' Bramston, p. 71, 1682.

Almost exactly identical with the modern form is the proverb 'As long as there is life there's hope'; *Hatton Correspondence*, p. 21, 1661.

The Letters and Diaries show a marked disregard for logical and even for grammatical construction. This in itself suggests the conclusion already drawn from other evidence, that the writers had no intention of publication. The thought is allowed to run freely on just as it passes through the writer's mind, clause after clause being added haphazard, with no attempt at co-ordination. Writing of this sort is sometimes held to be especially feminine, and we shall see that the women furnish us with many examples, but the other

¹ This symbol is used instead of the word 'moon'.

sex is by no means unrepresented, and some of the masculine irregularities excel in obscurity. An unfortunate Mrs. Mary Stradling's distresses, though heavy, cannot be held solely responsible for the amusing juxtaposition of her children and her furniture, nor for the elliptical construction of her final clause:

I have but a bare joynture, and that nott great nor anything left mee wthoutt doores, nor wthin any kind of furniture, but three sonnes and five daughters, altogether unprovided for by their father: how low I have lived to seeke to provide in some measure to keepe them from want after my deccas, were butt to add to y^r trouble.¹

A Lady Mundeford in her horror at the King's execution writes with wild disregard of syntax:

That horrid act of murdering our good King, whos hart cannot but morne that consider his Innocency and ther Cruelty.²

Lady Anne Sunderland's syntax is equally eccentric. She reassures Evelyn as to

12 pound 2 shilling which I have ready for you and which indeed I went away in such a hurey that though I had told your man to call heer I quite forgott it for which careless trick I pray forgive mee.³

When giving instructions for her building operations, her excitement causes her to pile clause on clause with no attempt at ordered construction:

if it be possible to make a place for the case of my chaire to stand that may be covered at the top to keep the wett of and to lay any thin wood upon it, if you can compass thes things for mee I shall be mighty convenient.⁴

On another occasion she gives instructions for the forwarding of a guest's luggage: 'What things he has to send down let him write on them his name.'⁵ This sentence illustrates her disregard of the natural order of words, which is further amusingly exemplified by the statement: 'Our dear boy is all over broke out his face.'⁶ Sometimes she writes an elliptical sentence, as when she speaks of her man-servant 'having been and still is sick'.⁷ This habit she shares with the metaphysician Lady Conway, who writes, for instance:

This proiect seemes to us so feasible and convenient in all respects, and both Deans gratified by it, that we cannot imagine anything should put a stopp to it.⁸

Such defects of composition add to the charming naturalness of the letters. Construction mattered little to Lady Conway, provided

¹ Add. MS. 38175. Correspondence of Sir Kenelm Digby.

² Add. MS. 27400.

³ Add. MS. 15889, p. 12.

⁵ Ibid., p. 49.

⁷ Add. MS. 15889, p. 4.

⁴ Ibid., p. 17.

⁶ Ibid., p. 57.

⁸ Add. MS. 23214, p. 22.

she made her meaning clear, which she generally succeeded in doing, even in such an involved sentence as

My Lady is very well and gone this day to visit my cosin S. no otherwise to any of us that I know of, then usuall, which is kind enough.¹

Her disregard of literary style, which to so accomplished a woman must have been more or less familiar, is shown by the impulsive awkwardness of the following statement:

He arrived not here all this day, *which because* I would not be prevented from giving you an account of . . .² (*italics mine*).

In the earnestness of her dying appeal to her brother she sends him books 'which I hope, as he shall seriously peruse in the fear of God, may give him satisfaction'.³ Awkwardnesses of construction occasionally mar the clear and flowing prose of Lady Fanshawe, as when she remarks that 'meat, and fuel, for half the Court to serve them a month was not to be had in the whole island'.⁴ Lady Russell's knowledge of grammar entirely deserts her at the close of one of her affectionate outpourings to her absent husband: 'Remembering no more tattle, *and being* nine o'clock, I take my leave.'⁵ This noble Lady's style can be clear and straightforward enough when recounting her own or her children's doings, but is often marred by such complexities as these:

I thought he would never have done to one of the ladies, you shall guess which, but I will personate her at this time whom he led by the hand, and after some impertinent questions, whether she would be at home, and when he said he had a favour to ask, but with so much disorder that she quickly suspecting said, he had made an ill choice to ask any favour, since she was never fortunate enough to do anybody a favour in all her life.⁶

When she writes to congratulate young Lady Ogle on her sudden marriage, her misgivings on the subject bring about inextricable confusion of language.

You have my prayers and wishes, dear Lady Ogle, that it may prove as fortunate to you as ever it did to any, and that you may know happiness to a good old age: but, Madam, I cannot think you can *be completely so*, with a misunderstanding *between* so near a relation as a mother⁷ (*italics mine*).

The Duchess of Newcastle attempts to defend her literary productions in a sentence the eccentricity of which equals that of her personal appearance.⁸

As soon as I set them [her thoughts] down I send them to those that are

¹ Ibid., p. 37.

² Ibid., p. 21.

³ Ibid., p. 40.

⁴ *Memoirs*, p. 71.

⁵ *Letters of Lady Russell*, p. 59.

⁶ Ibid., p. 2.

⁷ Ibid., p. 59.

⁸ Charles Lyttelton, one of the correspondents of the Hatton family, describes her behaviour on one occasion as 'very pleasant but rather to be seen than told. She was dressed in a vest, and, instead of courtesies, made leggs and bows to the ground with her hand and head'. [*Hatton Correspondence*, p. 47.]

to transcribe them, and fit them for the press; whereof, since there have been several, and amongst them such as only could write a good hand, but neither understood orthography, nor had any learning (I being then in banishment, with your lordship, and not able to maintain learned secretaries,) which hath been a great disadvantage to my poor works, and the cause that they have been printed so false and so full of errors; for besides that I want also skill in scholarship and true writing, I did many time not peruse the copies that were transcribed, lest they should disturb my following conceptions; by which neglect, as I said, many errors are slipt into my works, which, yet I hope, learned and impartial men will soon rectify, and look more upon the sense than carp at words.¹

It seems hard to use this candid defence as an example of the 'errors' it deploras, but the sentence is too characteristic to be omitted. The remarkable Duchess herself, in her haste to secure her original 'conceptions', could not have composed a more curious sentence than the following mysterious allusion by Charles Lyttelton to the circumstances of his wife's death:

And there are some [i. e. stories] concerning that poor girle w^{ch} by the appearance of other transactions you cannot suspect, I have soe much reason as I have to hate and will make you doe soe too (but for the present I must be silent) somebody that I have bin necessitated (I confesse basely enough) to acknowledge to the world my self most obliged; and yet I have something to palliate the matter in theyr behalf; if unheard of pride and inhumane discourtesy to a lady of her meritt may be allowed of, because it wanted the mallice to be purpossely acted to her prejudice.²

At a second or third reading the sense of this passage becomes tolerably clear, but takes no account of either grammar or punctuation. As another instance of masculine disregard of syntax, we may take a lengthy sentence of Sir John Bramston:

And here let me mention alsoe what Grimston told me on the bench at Chelmsford, at a special commission of Oyer and Terminer for tryall of some soulders, whoe had broke into the church at Easterford-Kelvedon, burnt the rayles about the communion table, stolen the surplice and the church plate, or some of it, my father sittinge there as judge, and his father, Sir Harbotle, Sir William Hicks, Sir Thomas Barrington, Sir William Masham, and I should have sayd first, the Earle of Warwicke, as justices and commissioners, whoe all had letters from the Lords of the Councell, requiringe their attendance, which they lookt upon as a marke sett upon themselves, because the Lord Mainard, Sir Benjamin Ayloff, Sir Henry Mildmay of Moulsham, and others had noe letters, only generall notice; and they at dinner were very earnest, I remember, with my father to know the reason, but he sayd they must enquire that of the Lords not of him.

¹ Scoones, *Four Centuries of English Letters*, pp. 117-18.

² *Hutton Correspondence*, p. 312.

It is small wonder that Bramston himself here feels the necessity of a full stop and a fresh beginning. 'But to goe on with my storie.'¹ Humphrey Prideaux, an Oxford don, can perpetrate a statement such as the following:

Ammianus Marcellinus, which, although to his language is very barbarous, is however a most excellent writer.²

James Vernon gives Sir Joseph Williamson the awkwardly-expressed information that 'the King hath granted them what boys of his Chappell they shall have occasion for to sing'.³ Clarendon himself falls into redundant awkwardness: 'the damage by the plague which nobody knew how long it might continue'.⁴ Another example of confused writing is the sentence in which Sir Roger Twysden commiserates his son's illness, with its alternation of 'thou' and 'you', and the tendency to throw the preposition to the end of its clause: 'I did desire you in sommer to provide wood for winter, w^{ch} you see how much need thou now hast of, and I pray send me word in every particular how thou doest, how your wind is, and what you find most want of.'⁵ An interesting sentence is this of John Strype as a University student to his mother: 'The season beginning now to hasten towards Winter, and a coat I shall have great occasion for.'⁶ This loose placing of the preposition is a fault common to many of the writers. Lady Anne Sunderland writes: 'this trouble I have given you which I cannot now add anything more to',⁷ and Lady Conway remarks that her brother is going to Padua 'to enjoy his thoughts which he hath been so long diverted from'.⁸

Some common grammatical peculiarities of the colloquial writers may conveniently be grouped here.

I. *Use of the Infinitive for the Present Participle.*

'there being little comfort, God wot, *to breathe* (= in breathing) English air'. Howell, vol. ii, p. 426, 1646.

'which makes me think myself very unfortunate *to have* (= having) all my letters miscary.' Lady Conway, p. 39, 1657.

It 'shall necessitate *him to spend* (= his spending) at the least one yeare in Italy'. Ibid., p. 17, 1658.

'He is in great hopes *to be returned* (= of returning) againe with you to London.' Ibid., p. 15, 1658.

'I desire you would do me the favour *to buy* (= of buying) them. Ibid., p. 25, 1664.

¹ *Autobiography*, p. 76.

² Prideaux, *Letters to Ellis*, p. 65.

³ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. i, p. 181.

⁴ Clarendon, *Life (Continuation)*, p. 283.

⁵ Add. MS. 34161.

⁶ Ellis, *Letters of Literary Men*, p. 180.

⁷ Add. MS. 15889, p. 25.

⁸ Add. MS. 23214, p. 17.

'Sir James Halkett seldome missed *to be* (= being) one.'

Lady Halkett, c. 1674, p. 78.

Another curious use, this time of the perfect infinitive, is:

'They impeacht him *of traitterously to have assumed* the regall power to himself.' Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 28, 1678.

II. Use of the Present Participle.

(a) The Present Participle is sometimes used for the Past Participle.

'with regard to the army at this time *levying*'.

Reresby, p. 176, c. 1660.

'I met a dead corps of the plague, in the narrow ally, just *bringing* down a little pair of stairs.' Pepys, 15 Aug. 1665.

'a great deal of mony being now *expendeing* on St. Mary's'.

Prideaux, p. 50, 1676.

'there being much robbery daily *committing*'.

Lady Fanshawe, p. 117, 1676.

(b) The Present Participle after 'in order to'.

'I was willing to speake with my lord *in order to puting* of (= off) this.' Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 4, 1674.

Woodruff 'talketh what he will do *in order to the reforming* of the house'. Prideaux, p. 26, 1674.

Cp. 'what he communicated freely to me *in order to* his estate or family'. Lady Fanshawe, p. 67, 1676.

An example of the Present Participle used for the Infinitive is:

'It is out of my province *writing* on thes matters.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 29, 1678.

III. The Past Participle.

This is sometimes used as in Latin:

'The news is certaine for Portugal *revolted*'.

Rous, p. 113, 1640.

'after the first time *excepted*'. Lady Fanshawe, p. 107, 1676.

IV. Construction with the Present Participle of the Verb 'to be'.

This is frequently used in a causal sense, equivalent to 'because' or 'since'.

Lady Conway writes to her absent husband that a Mr. Gee brought a box of documents which was to be opened 'when you were present and Sir Or. Bridgeman, *wch being* not to be done now (= since it cannot be done now), they have agreed (Mr. Gee *being* this day to returne to his lord) yt the box shall be left untouched.'

Lady Conway, p. 5, 1655.

'I *being* to receive it all'. Ibid., p. 36, 1655.

'*Beeing* then about another (servant) w^{ch} I did yesterday take.' Ibid., p. 19, 1659.

'He *being* to be there the next day, would effectually doe his businesse for him.' Prideaux, p. 43, 1675.

He 'bade me trust God with him, as he did me, in whose mercy he hoped, *being* upon that duty he was obliged to'.

Lady Fanshawe, p. 103, 1676.

Cp. 'Let me have yr. company to-morrow *being* Sunday.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 6, 1676.

V. Use of a singular Verb with a Plural Noun.

e. g. 'There is not any letters as yet come to you.'

Lady Conway, p. 12, 1657.

'The banes (= banns) . . . *was* forbidden.'

Ibid., p. 39, 1657.

'The rest (of the horses) *continues* well.' Ibid., p. 23, 1663.

'The apprehensions of her quitting me so suddenly *doth* so much perplex me.'

Ibid., p. 22, 1663.

'There is no hopes.'

Ibid.

'If any of my friends *seems* to take it ill I doe not write.'

Ibid., p. 32, 1664.

'My Lord's affaires *has* been such.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 7, 1676.

'An impeachment containing 5 articles, the 2 first which they built most upon *was* what Mr Montagus letters furnisht.'

Ibid., p. 28, 1678.

Two ladies '*desires* their service may be sent you and *joins* with mine to yr. lady'.

Ibid., p. 55, 1680.

Cp. 'The News of this week *have* been like the waves of that boisterous sea.'

Howell, vol. ii, p. 430, 1644.

VI. The Use of Adjective for Adverb.

'*Huge* gentlemanlike.'

Verney Memoirs, vol. iii (1892), p. 153, 1653.

'This *extreame* sickly time.' Lady Conway, p. 15, 1658.

'All of us hadd *inevitable* been drowned.'

Lady Halkett, p. 104, c. 1674.

'She is a *perfect* good judg.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 13, 1676.

'I have bin *extrem* ill.'

Ibid., p. 37, 1679.

VII. *The Relative Pronoun.*

(a) Omission of Relative.

'Monk has a brother lives in Cornwall.'

Dorothy Osborne, p. 140, 1653.

'the care you have taken in enquiring after the cure was related to you' (= which was related).

Lady Conway, p. 39, 1657.

'I have sent you enclosed all the letters came by the last post.'

Ibid., p. 36, 1665.

'It is nott true she says' (= what she says).

Lady Halkett, p. 50, c. 1674.

'They had a discreet woman attended them.' Ibid., p. 39.

'I beseech God it may produce ye effects is hoped for from it.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 15, 1677.

'I share in any affliction befalls you.' Ibid., p. 51, 1680.

Cp. 'A matter never known to have happened before, and that has no other excuse but "le mauvais temps".'

Savile Correspondence, p. 36, 1673.

Note. The practice of indicating omission of the relative by a comma does not seem to be common as late as our period. Mr. Percy Simpson's latest example is 1643.¹

(b) Use of 'that' and 'which' for 'who'.

'the coachman *that* he is to hire yr horses of'.

Lady Conway, p. 39, 1657.

'cologue my lord duke out of proposing a menial servant of his own before your brother, *that* was known in the country'.

Savile Correspondence, p. 25, 1670.

'Beeing then about another (servant) *which* I did yesterday take.'

Lady Conway, p. 19, 1659.

'My father's new wife, *which* he had then married.'

Lady Fanshawe, p. 69, 1676.

Cp. 'They keep their reserve in case of dearth or scarcity, *what* it seems they have often suffered under.'

Reresby, p. 42, c. 1660.

It appears from these examples that weak construction and faulty grammar are common to both men and women writers at this time, but especially to the women. We have seen also a great deal of wordiness on the part of both sexes, and this is characteristic of epistolary style even where there is no syntactical offence. Attention was drawn to the weighty parentheses in a letter of Francis

¹ Simpson, *Shakespearian Punctuation*, p. 56 (Clarendon Press, 1911).

Cornwallis to Sir Kenelm Digby (p. 5), and the same wordy device is typical of Clarendon, both in his *Life* and in his letters. Mr. Percy Simpson¹ has pointed out that Shakespeare's printer adopted brackets to avoid grammatical ambiguity. Their use in our period may be a legacy from the Elizabethans, but our examples will show a tendency to employ them simply as an outlet for instinctive wordiness or a way of avoiding the trouble of splitting up a lengthy sentence. A passage from a letter to Lord Witherington will serve as illustration:

If you find that his Lordship himself may not be prevailed with to adorn these actions with his own incomparable style (which indeed would render them fit to be bound up with the other commentaries) vouchsafe I beseech your Lordship, that by your means I may be trusted with such counsels and occurrences as you shall judge fit to be submitted to the ill apparel I shall be able to supply them with; which I will take care (how simple soever) shall not defraud them of their due integrity which will be ornament enough.²

Even in an account of plain facts this love of parenthesis is apparent.

This afternoone a very sober marchant was with me and told me that with this fleet was arrived the Humphrey and Elizabeth (a ship of 40 guns sent out by the East India Company in November last with recruits for the fort at [St.] Helena) and the Suratte marchant man of 26 guns from the East Indies, that the captain of the former advises that he, together with the said Suratte marchant, were at St Helena when three Dutch men-of-war, fitted out at the Cape of Good Hope by the Dutch, arrived there, and that they were in fight with them one whole day till evening, when the Dutch (while our ships expected to engage them againe the next morning) gott to the other side of the island and in the night landed 700 men, who without any difficulty made themselves masters of the fort; upon which the Humphry and Elizabeth together with the Suratte took their course to Brasile, where they hired a small vessell to goe out and meet our East India ships, that are comeing home to give them notice of what had happened, and so proceeded homeward.³

This extract, while illustrating the weakness of parenthesis, illustrates too the lucidity attainable even in so long a sentence. The faults of these writers are counterbalanced by their corresponding virtues. Bramston may be guilty of a hopelessly involved and lengthy sentence, but when he wishes to give a clear and succinct narrative, he can do it in these terms:

From him I came to Mr Farnabie, whoe taught school in a garden house in Goldsmyths' allie, a fine airie place; he had ioyned two or three

¹ *loc. cit.*, pp. 91-2.

² Scoones, *Four Centuries of English Letters*, p. 100.

³ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. i, pp. 8-9.

gardens and houses together, and had a great manie boarders and towne schollars, soe manie that he had 2, somtymes three, ushers besides himselfe. I boarded with him, though my father lived then in Philip lane, very near the schoole. . . . With him I stayed more than two, nay, full three yeares. At partinge, he shewed me my first and last theames, and sayd, 'Thus you came, and thus you goe; God speed you!'¹

There could not be a more lucid and straightforward statement of the facts. The length of a sentence did not necessarily impede a seventeenth-century writer from marshalling its component parts into a logical whole. Temple can produce a perfectly clear statement of considerable length, by the use of judicious balance and emphasis. On his part in the Triple Alliance treaty, he writes to Halifax:

The reflections I make upon what you say, and what I hear from other hands of the same kind, carry me only to consider how much by chance, and how unqually, persons and things are judged at a distance, and make me apprehend, from so much more applause than is my due upon this occasion, that upon the next I may meet with as much more blame than I deserve; as one seldom has a great run of cards which is not followed by an ill one, at least gamesters that are no luckier than I.²

Algernon Sidney, writing in some emotion and considerable bitterness, produces prose as admirably knit as Hamlet's famous letter to Horatio.

My Lord,

I have bin long doubtfull of my condition in England, wavering betwene the opinions expressed by somme of my friends, in their letters, and my owne. The letters of the tow last posts have put me out of that uncertainty, and shew me plainely what I am to expect. . . . I choose this voluntary exile, as the least evill condition that is within my reach. It is bitter, but not soe much soe, as the others that are in my prospect. I am in an ill condition to make a long journey; if I came into England, and stayed a moneth or tow, I should be in a worse, and perhaps not able to come away, when I desire it. I have not yet resolved upon the place of my residence; but I dislike all the drunken countries of Germany, and the north, and am not much inclined to France. I think I shall choose Italy.³

We have many examples of this type of close-knit, nervous prose, showing that the letter-writers of the period, for all their frequent slovenliness of style, were of the generation of Dryden. Tillotson, asked for advice as to whether a person may change his living, gives his opinion in highly business-like terms.

Honord Sir,

I am sorry that I did not know of your being in town that I might

¹ *Autobiography*, pp. 101-2.

² Scoones, *Four Centuries of English Letters*, p. 127.

³ *Sidney Papers* (ed. Blencowe), p. 191.

have paid my respects to you at your lodgings. It is upon Mr Brabant's request that I now give you this trouble. . . . I know that our Law calls a man's Living his wife, but there is no arguing from similitudes, if the reason be not equal in both cases, which I confess I do not see.¹

Marvell compresses an account of the royal financial transactions into a series of brief sentences, almost telegraphic in their emphasis.

The King had occasion for sixty thousand pounds. Sent to borrow it of the city. Sterlin, Robinson, and all the rest of that faction, were at it many a week, and could not get above ten thousand. The fanatics, under persecution, served his Majesty. The other part, both in court and city, would have prevented it. But the King protested money would be acceptable. So the King patched up, out of the Chamber, and other ways, twenty thousand pounds. The fanatics, of all sorts, forty thousand. The King, though against many of his Council, would have the Parliament sit this twenty-fourth of October. He, and the Keeper spoke of nothing but to have money. Some one million three hundred thousand pounds, to pay off the debt at interest; and eight hundred thousands for a brave navy next Spring. . . . There is like to be a terrible riot of Conventicles. The Prince of Orange here is made much of. The King owes him a great deal of money. The Paper is full.²

Such vigour, without its exaggerated brevity, is characteristic also of Henry Teonge, a breezy naval chaplain, whose *Diary* is full of graphic little pictures such as the following:

Now very often the seas breake over our waste, and com in at our scuttles, and doe us som small injurys. Now our tables and chayres are lashed fast to the boardes; our dishes held on the table, and our bottles of wine held in our hands.³

Delightful in its plain vigour is the complacent remark of a certain Sir Francis Chaplin on a troublesome opponent's fate:

In the citty they sum time sins chose one Mead, a Quaker, Sheriff, who with his party did intend to give the Citty a great troble, but we put on a good resolution and turned him off and sent him to Newgate for his rudnes to the Court, and now the gentleman is a little tamer.⁴

No letters of the period can exceed those of Prideaux for forcefulness of language towards those whom he dislikes or despises. Pembroke is 'the fittest colledge in town for brutes';⁵ a foolish friend 'is furiously about to print'⁶ a seaman's journal; and he disrespectfully remarks of his Principal who has been complaining of the collectors of chimney money, 'the old fool hath been forced to pay the money'.⁷ A similar energy of phrase was employed by Sir Nicholas Armourer when, disregarding the important mission

¹ Ellis, *Letters of Literary Men*, pp. 192-3.

² Scoones, *Four Centuries of English Letters*, pp. 111-12.

⁴ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. ii, p. 18.

⁵ *Letters of Prideaux*, p. 3.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 24.

³ *Diary*, p. 27.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 52.

on which his correspondent was engaged, he urged him 'for God's sake make hast home with peace or without. I know Cullen (Cologne) is a damed place in winter for folks of your humer.'¹

The sense of the emphatic possibilities of a well-turned prose sentence sometimes shows itself in a pleasant neatness of phrase, such as that employed by Sir Thomas Player when he humorously laments 'to adde to our sorrows, I heare your Excellencye hath sent for winter shooes, by which wee apprehend your stay abroad to be longer than is wish't by your servants here'.² Without the humour, but with equal neatness and perfect sense of emphasis, Jeremy Taylor exhorts his bereaved friend John Evelyn:

Sir, if you do not look to it, time will snatch your honour from you, and reproach you for not effecting that by Christian philosophy which time will do alone.³

In certain writers this neatness assumes almost epigrammatic force. Tillotson admonishes Shrewsbury, in whose conversion to Protestantism he has had a share,

I am sure you cannot more effectually condemn your own act, than by being a worse man after your profession to have embrac'd a better religion.⁴

And Halifax, to whom the epigrammatic style surely came naturally, can produce a sentence worthy of Bacon:

Generosity wrong placed becometh a Vice.⁵

It has been thought of interest to collect certain miscellaneous phrases used in the Letters and Diaries, for comparison and contrast with those in use in the twentieth century. These will be arranged under three headings.

A. *Common Phrases identical with those of the present day.*

- | | |
|-------------------------|--|
| desperately ill. | Soldiers looked so ' <i>desperately ill</i> '. Lady Halkett, p. 62, c. 1674. |
| for fear. | 'I long to have him gone home to you <i>for fear</i> you want him.' Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 36, 1679. |
| get off. | King 'was willing the count (Konigsmark) should <i>get off</i> ' (after his murder of Thynne). Reresby, p. 227, c. 1660. |
| to go on (= behave). | 'And so he <i>goeth one</i> to all his antes' (aunts). <i>Verney Memoirs</i> , vol. i, p. 217 (1925), 1639. [N.B. <i>N.E.D.</i> First example 1777.] |

¹ *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. ii, p. 27.

² *Ibid.*, vol. i, p. 135.

⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 132.

³ Scoones, p. 106.

⁵ *Advice to a Daughter*, p. 94.

To be good at something. 'For History (especially the French) . . . he *is very good at it*'.

Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 79 (1892), 1652.

Height of ambition. 'The *height of my ambition* is to have a bricke pent hous.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 15, 1677.

To stick to. 'When all others had yielded themselves to Augustus, he only *stuck to him*.'

Slingsby, *Memoirs*, p. 78, 1658.

She wishes Commons 'would *stick to* the weightyer concerns of our laws and religion'.

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 27, 1678.

A sentence curiously modern in tone must be quoted in full: 'The few hours we have been parted seem too many to me, to let this first post-night pass, with out giving my dear man a little talk.'

Lady Russell, p. 15, 1675.

B. *Common Phrases that have undergone modification.*

considering. 'He is but a little hurt that is *in considering* what great danger he was in.'

Lady Anne Sunderland, p. 20, 1679.

fits and starts. Ralph is at Claydon only '*by fits and spurts*'.

Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 113 (1892), 1653.

for certain. 'Newes that Aragon was revolted from Spain *of certaine*.'

Rous, p. 121, 1640.

Cp. 'The newes is certaine for Portugal revolted.'

Ibid., p. 113, 1640.

keep one's feet. 'They were so shaken they could skarce *hold their feett*' (in earthquake).

Lady Halkett, p. 44, c. 1674.

C. *Phrases now obsolete.*

huffed and shuffled. 'Him they *huffed and shuffled* about, but (as is said) hurt not otherwise.'

Rous, p. 122, 1642.

scandalise one's person. Mildmay maintained that he brought accusation 'not out of any particular unkindness to the petitioner, neither had he any designe to *scandalise his person*, but accordinge to his dutie and loyaltie to your Majestic'.

Bramston, p. 133, 1683.

to snaffle the forlorn. The foot '*snaffled our forlorn* (=overcame the vanguard), and put them to retreat.'

Hodgson, p. 122, 1683.

upon the matter =in fact. Frequently used by Clarendon, e.g. the Dutch 'were sensible enough that they had been upon the matter betrayed into the war'.

[*N.E.D.* gives definition 'taking the thing as a whole'.]

(*Continuation*), p. 331.

Close study of the Letters and Diaries of the period 1640-80 has yielded some examples of words used at a date earlier than the first examples recorded in the *N.E.D.*, and a few instances of words unrecorded in a special sense. These have been collected, and will be tabulated here.

- Chocked up. ' 'Tis now half *chocked up* with rubbish.'
 Evelyn's Diary, 7 Feb. 1644.
 Not recorded in this form with this meaning. For *choke up*: 'to block up a channel', *N.E.D.* gives 1673, as first instance.
- Cologue. 'You might compliment and *cologue* my lord duke out of proposing' a candidate for Retford.
 Henry Savile, p. 25, 1670.
 First recorded instance ('to prevail upon or coax') is 1676.
- Disgruntle. Death of a horse 'doth much *disgruntle* me'.
Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 193 (1892), 1652.
 First recorded instance is 1682.
- Squelch. The story 'being noised abroad, *squelched* the Coll.'s (colonel's) pretensions'. Prideaux, p. 79, 1679.
 No recorded instance of this figurative use earlier than 1864.
- Garinosity. '*garinosity* between the Presbyterians and Independents'. Charles I, 1646.
 (Marginal note gives 'hatred or animosity'.)
 No recorded instance.
- Picket. 'I . . . mind not every little *picket* of hers' (=foible).
Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 314 (1892), 1659.
 No recorded instance.
- Testicated. 'My head is so *testicated* with the times' (=confused).
Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 479 (1892), 1660.
 No recorded instance.

N.B.—De-votee. Edmund Verney styles himself his cousin's 'devotee' (in italics).

Verney Memoirs, vol. iii, p. 333 (1892), 1658.

N.E.D. has 'devote and devotee were used indifferently from c. 1675 to 1725'. First instance in sense of votary (not religious) is 1657.

Cp. 'Dr. Taylor (whose devote you must know I am).' Dorothy Osborne, p. 212, c. 1654.

Purloin. 'Some odd fellows . . . *purloined* them' (children).

Howell, vol. ii (ed. Repplier), p. 262, 1643.

Only one instance (of 1489) in this sense (i. e. with a person as object).

The Letters and Diaries suggest that in the matter of spelling the sexes were less evenly matched in the seventeenth century than they are to-day. It is true that certain women spell fairly correctly, while certain men spell incredibly badly, but the masculine average is much higher than the feminine, and the men are decidedly more consistent. This admission need not commit us to an acknowledgment of Macaulay's contention that seventeenth-century women entirely neglected education. He declares that

ladies highly born, highly bred, and naturally quick witted, were unable to write a line in their mother tongue without solecisms and faults of spelling such as a charity girl would now be ashamed to commit.¹

Even if this sweeping condemnation be granted, it is no definite proof of neglected education. We have accounts of the education of girls of the time² which suggest that great attention was paid to those branches which were held most necessary and suitable for a maiden of gentle birth. Spelling was of less importance than a knowledge of French, of music and of needlework. In these modern days, good spelling is a commercial asset, but in the seventeenth century women did not need commercial assets and their spelling was good enough for their purposes. Temple probably liked Dorothy Osborne's letters none the less for an occasional quaintness of orthography, and the highly educated Lady Conway could misspell her words with no sense of shame. A collection of some of these spellings may, however, prove of interest.

The MS. Diary of Lady Warwick is an invaluable source of comparison between the spelling of a man and a woman, for her five large volumes were after her death annotated and revised by her domestic chaplain. He scribbles his notes in the margin, or in

¹ Macaulay, vol. i, p. 308 (1866 edition).

² That of Lady Fanshawe or Mrs. Hutchinson.

a blank space at the end of a paragraph or even between her lines, and painstakingly crosses out her misspelt words, writing in the correct spelling above. We can thus compare the contemporary spellings of a high-born woman and a man of much lower rank, though probably of some education in virtue of his position. The result is startlingly in favour of the man. The simplest method of arrangement will be to list a selection of representative words in two parallel columns, Lady Warwick's spellings in the first and Mr. Woodroffe's corrections in the second.

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| haithnieng | heightning |
| sofuringes | sufferings |
| complesanie | complacency |
| cored | carried |
| hopeful <i>aire</i> | heir |
| crisnieng | Christning |
| aproucch | approach |
| intaingegelling | entanglements (here the word is corrected in itself) |
| intaiengullments | entanglements |
| sainctyde | sanctified |
| neasisary | necessary |
| reputianes | tianes crossed out and -tations written above |
| askorenor | a scorner |
| strike | strict |
| deptares | debtors |
| copell | couple |
| apapleksy | apoplexy |
| Mr. Raige | Wrag |
| Mr. harburte | Herbert |
| prosideinges | proceedings |
| neafue | nephew |
| sorten } | certain |
| unsorten } | |
| mititate | meditate |
| untorde | untoward |
| anufe | enough |
| compontion | compunction |
| close | clothes |
| chekorworke | chequer worke |
| plaste | placed |
| mathenationes | machinations |
| moredge | marriage |

We may note Lady Warwick's erratic methods. 'Intaingegelling' and 'intaiengullments' is a case in point, both very peculiar spellings and neither consistent with the other. She can run two words together, as in 'askorenor', and she can spell proper names with or without a capital letter, just as the fancy takes her. The chaplain's orthography, on the other hand, is extremely good, and his corrections in nearly every case take the form that the word would take in orthodox twentieth-century spelling. Some of his omissions are curious, and can only be accounted for by the heaviness of the task he had set himself in revising his patroness's inconsistencies. He does not correct, among others, 'quiknieng', 'mersyes', or 'spesall' though in 'espesall' the final syllable is crossed out and 'cial' written above.

This source for comparison of spellings is peculiarly valuable, but interesting material can be found elsewhere. The erratic nature of women's spelling can be illustrated by Lady Halkett, who, for instance, quotes a letter from Mr. 'Seymour', spelling the name correctly, and just above refers to him as 'Seamar'. Dame Margaret Herbert writes to Sir Ralph Verney about some 'amell' (enamel) in two separate letters, although before her second she has received a letter from him in which he spells the word correctly. It seems that women did not as a rule take the trouble to consider such questions, or even to notice a divergence between their own practice and that of their correspondents. Yet they can be consistent in their faults. Lady Warwick, for instance, generally spells final '-ings' as '-iengs', though she occasionally uses the variant '-eings', and in the singular keeps to the normal -ing. Lady Halkett almost invariably doubles final t; repentt; itt; preventt; quiett; wentt; impatientt; and sometimes doubles t when medial; suspicion (but cp. occation); writtes; cittisen. Lady Sussex affects the spelling c for initial s and writes cuffer; cuch, beceech. Lady Brilliana Harley's spelling is, like that of Lady Warwick, a law unto herself alone, and in her case there is no Mr. Woodroffe to provide a wholesome contrast. Her spellings can only be judged by a representative list:

| | |
|-----------------|---------------------------|
| a vanimos | (unanimous) |
| aguesused | (accused) |
| rwit | (write) always thus spelt |
| blles | (bless) |
| resouled | (resolved) |
| resoulfes | (resolves) |
| chillderen | (children) |
| rooat | (root) |
| deases | (disease) |
| ends (of Court) | (Inns) |

| | |
|----------------|-----------------|
| Grasein | (Gray's Inn) |
| Linconsine | (Lincoln's Inn) |
| carrage | (carriage) |
| cairage | |
| caraiqe | |
| carage | |
| firer | (fire) |
| excicuted | (executed) |
| childeischness | (childishness) |
| condistion | (condition) |
| sparigous | (asparagus) |
| theiare | (their) |
| horsess | (horses) |
| horrres | |
| opotion | (opposition) |
| strentghen | (strengthen) |
| milica | (militia) |
| poscibell | (possible) |
| randevous | (rendezvous) |
| whas | (was) |
| Shwsbury | (Shrewsbury) |
| knwe | (knew) |

She spells the proper name Wright sometimes correctly and sometimes Rwit, and writes the following curious sentence, the proper names being obviously identical: 'Mr *Husbands* is married, and a most abundant loueing cuppell they say they are; and old Mrs *Hubbins* is goone to liue with her daughter.'¹

The only masculine writer who can at all compete with such erratic orthography is a correspondent of Sir Joseph Williamson, Sir Nicholas Armourer. Even he has not so many nor such varied inconsistencies to his credit. He favours doubled consonants; wiffe; houss; doggs; watters; saffest; supply; peasse; peopell; beleffe (belief). Two of his sentences are curious enough for full quotation:

'Here is an office stays for you, and Teague tells mee a wiffe too in the Mall, and hee lickes (likes) her verie well ay Taite and has writ to tee (thee) about it.'

'Dick Talbot and Father Patrick are both marched off, but have left the gallery too crowded with their excellent countrymen, that I am forced to goe fidelling through what shuch shovells off those vipers doe heare God knows' (i. e. though what such shoals of those vipers do here).²

¹ *Letters of Lady Brilliana Harley*, p. 141.

² *Letters to Sir Joseph Williamson*, vol. ii, p. 27.

Attempts at phonetic spelling are made occasionally by both men and women. Such are: 'quier' and 'quire' (Symonde); 'boarson', alternating with 'boatwaine' (Teonge); 'coxon' (Pepys); 'hickup' (Pepys); 'husfrey' (~ housewifery) (Anne Montague: *Hatton Correspondence*); 'inditement' (Rous); 'loare' (~ lower) (Teonge); 'Norfuck' (Edmund Verney); 'quintirene' (Grace Bokenham); 'shier' and 'shiere' (Thomas Browne); 'iordis' (~ towards) (Cary Gardiner; *Verney Memoirs*, cp. 'untorde' [Lady Warwick]); 'trihumfc' (Lady Brilliana Harley); 'woch' (~ watch) (Peg Elmes: *Verney Memoirs*, cp. wacth [Lady Brilliana Harley].)

A collection of varied Place and Proper Name spellings may be added.

| | | |
|---------------------|---------------|---|
| Anwicke | (Alnwick) | Lady Halkett |
| Belcarese | (Balcarres) | Lady Halkett |
| Belmerinoth | (Balmerino) | Lady Halkett |
| Bullingbroke | | Richard Baxter |
| Brun Island } | (Burntisland) | Lady Halkett |
| Brunt } | | |
| Carlile | | Lady Halkett |
| Schescheere | (Cheshire) | Lady Brilliana Harley |
| Crismus | | Dorothy Lecke (<i>Verney Memoirs</i>) |
| Chrismas } | (Cirencester) | John Verney |
| Christmas } | | |
| Sisseter | | Henry Verney |
| Coddisdon | | Cary Gardiner |
| Cudsdon | | Ralph Verney |
| Dedfort } | (Dieppe) | Lady Anne Sunderland |
| Detford (twice) } | | |
| Detford | | John Rous |
| Deep | | Lady Conway |
| Diepe | | Mary Verney |
| Diepe | | Ralph Verney |
| Edenborough | | Lady Halkett |
| Glames | | Lady Halkett |
| 'Guybralter, alis } | (Gibraltar) | Teonge |
| Gibblitore } | | |
| Gibbletoire | | |
| Gore | (Gower) | Lady Halkett |
| Hambleton | (Hamilton) | Lady Halkett |
| Harridge | | Teonge |
| Kinowle | (Kinnoull) | Lady Halkett |
| Lumbert St | | Lady Hobart (<i>Verney Memoirs</i>) |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|------------|--|
| Mamsbery | | Lady Rochester |
| Meenes | (Menzies?) | Lady Halkett |
| Montpeston | | Rous |
| [Mompesson written in margin] | | |
| Plimworth | } | Teonge |
| Plimmouth | | |
| Plymouth | | |
| Portsmouth | } | Teonge |
| Portchmouth | | |
| Roan | } | Clarendon |
| | | Evelyn |
| | | Edward Browne |
| Rouen | | Sir Thomas Browne |
| | | Lady Twysden |
| Ruterford | | Edward Browne |
| Tewxbury | | Lord Spencer (husband of 'Saccharissa') |
| Weemes | (Wemyss) | Symonds |
| Westmester | | { Lady Conway Lady Twysden |

Certain eccentricities of spelling can be grouped under recognized laws. There are, for instance, some instances of metathesis, e. g. brithday (Anne Montague); Yatch alternating with yacht (Henry Savile); heigth (Lady Conway, but cp. streight in same letter). There are also curious examples of the transference of final n in 'an' to the following noun if the latter's initial letter be a vowel; e. g. a negg (Pen Denton: *Verney Memoirs*); a nass (a Verney servant); 'a nupper coat' (a Verney servant); a nende and a nothar (Lady Denton: *Verney Memoirs*); a nother (Peg Elmes: *Verney Memoirs*); a nagye (=an ague) (Mrs. Isham: *Verney Memoirs*). A tendency to syncopate final and medial e or i appears with some frequency; e. g. botls (Lady Anne Sunderland); coachs (plural) (Lady Conway); imbrodry and embrodred (Evelyn); letres (Prideaux); pettcoat (Anne Montague); troublsome and troublsomest (Lady Anne Sunderland). Certain words show a great number of variant forms; *Daughter*: dafter (Grace Bokenham, cp. her 'thof' for 'though'); dafter (Mrs. Sherard); daufter (Cary Gardiner). *Lieutenant*: lieftenant (Rous); lieutenant (Lady Halkett); Leiftenant (Symonds); leiftenant (D'Ewes); leiuetenant (Teonge). *Soldier*: soldjer (Symonds); soulder (Lady Brilliana Harley); solger and soulder (Bramston); soelger (Edward Browne); soulder (Lady Twysden). There is a good deal of variety in the addition of g to words with final or medial n, and the reverse process. E. g. Badming-

ton (Symonds); bumking (Lord Windsor: *Hatton Correspondence*); compangione (Anne Montague); drunkcing (Prideaux); Eveling (=Evelyn) (Rous); lennen (Teonge) and linning (Pepys); puddins (child Verney); ribinge (Lady Sussex: *Verney Memoirs*); stockins (Lady Anne Sunderland); tarpaulings (Prideaux).

Finally, there is a collection of what may be described as 'freak' spellings:

| | | |
|---|---------------|-----------------------------|
| aggravacoins | | Symonds |
| yle | (=aisle) | Symonds |
| agmarine | (aquamarine) | Edward Browne |
| bocxc | | Lady Lucy Stanley (Scoones) |
| caressing | (=carousing) | Symonds |
| eclicpes | | Grace Bokenham |
| escochcon | (=escutcheon) | Symonds |
| harnois (twice) | | Lady Conway |
| aumuliet | (ommelette) | Edward Browne |
| porcelan | } | Evelyn |
| purselane | | |
| Portmantle | | Edward Browne |
| (cp. portmanteau in letter of his father) | | |
| Valans | (=valance) | Evelyn |
| vallins | (=valance) | Ralph Verney |
| yealk | (=yolk) | Evelyn |

Note: 'a' for 'he' is used always in Henry Verney's letters; 'a' for 'have' once in a letter of Peg Elmes; 'um' for 'them' twice in a letter of Sir Charles Lyttelton.

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THE ENGLISH ASSOCIATION

Pamphlet No. 75

The Grammarian and
His Material

BY

J. M. WATTIE

March 1930

THE GRAMMARIAN AND HIS MATERIAL

‘WE are all Greeks’, says Shelley. ‘Our laws, our literature, our religion, our arts have their roots in Greece.’ Here no doubt is something of an over-statement. In the domain of law we still have some regard to the Mosaic Code, and some at least of the roots of our religion have been followed by persistent digging down to the nethermost stratum of Ur of the Sumerians. But of the origin of our arts in general and of the grammatic art in particular there is no question. These are undoubtedly Greek. The first treatise on language of which we have any record was written by Protagoras, under the title of *περὶ ὀρθοεπειας*, ‘Concerning correctness of diction’. The title is instructive, indicating as it does the attitude which has characterized the grammarian throughout his history. One of his main concerns has always been correctness. What I propose to do is to consider the nature and the sources of his material and some of the phases of this attitude and from these considerations to draw some practical conclusions.

The dramatic art of the Greeks had for its subject-matter *γράμματα*, things written down, mainly what we call literature; and the business of the *γραμματίστης* or teacher of grammar was to enable young persons to read and understand books. Hence the art is considerably wider than what we commonly mean by grammar, including interpretation, textual criticism, and a certain amount of what we understand by rhetoric. The art was extensively developed at Alexandria and Pergamos, mainly by the officials of the splendid libraries established by the Ptolemys and the Attali. To begin with, the chief business of the librarians was the collection of books, in which they were abundantly successful. The greater of the two Alexandrian libraries, the Museum, is said to have contained 400,000 volumes, representing no fewer than 90,000 distinct works. The quality of this immense mass of material must have been of great variety, ranging from *e. g.* through *g.* and *f. g.* down to *n. g.*; and the need for discrimination must have early made itself apparent. The expository grammarian in particular could not possibly distribute over all these authors an equal share of attention. The way in which the problem was dealt with was by the production of a carefully selected list of approved writers in each of the literary kinds—a list of exemplary writers of epic, of lyric, of tragedy, and what not. The best known of the lists

is the Canon of the Ten Attic Orators. Here we see the grammarian in his characteristic attitude of judge, indicating to the world at large precisely where correctness is to be found and devoting himself with ardent zeal to the elucidation and exposition of these models of excellence.

The earliest extant grammar was written by Dionysius Thrax in the first century B.C. In addition to enjoying this position of primacy, Dionysius is noteworthy also on two other counts. Not only is his grammar the first of all grammars and the original source of all other grammars, but it had further a perennality rivalling that of Euclid's Elements. Professor Gilbert Murray has told us that the Thracian's grammar was still in use at Winchester when his grandfather was a school-boy there. The other distinction is that Dionysius was, if not the first, one of the first Greek teachers of Greek in Rome. The language which he expounds (with *τίπτω* as his model verb) is in all essentials the Attic prose of Xenophon. By his time this language had become the lingua franca, the common dialect, of the whole Eastern world, the language of diplomatic and business intercourse, from Magna Græcia and even Marsilles in the west to the borders of India in the east; from Trebizond on the Euxine to the margin of Ethiopia. It was used by Parthians and Medes and Elamites, by the dwellers in Mesopotamia and in Judea and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt and the parts of Libya about Cyrene. It was used by merchants in making up their accounts and by dying men in making their wills. In this language Antony carried on his ardent, and Caesar his cold-blooded, wooing of Cleopatra. It is best known to us as the language of the New Testament. A remarkable feature of it is its longevity. From the fourth century B.C. it continued in uninterrupted use down through the reigns of the thirteen Constantines to the defeat of the last of them, appropriately named Palæologus, in 1453. The business of Dionysius Thrax and the multitude of his successors was to teach all the nations of the eastern world the correct usages of this unvarying language from the original and eternal models.

In passing I may remark that this continuity of the Greek language is strikingly exemplified also in the Greek Anthology, the blossoming of whose flowers ranges from 700 B.C. to A.D. 1200, a period of wellnigh 2,000 years.

When we turn from Greek to Latin, we find exact parallels both in the history of the language and in the attitude to it of the grammarians. For both languages there came a comparatively

brief period of high summer, producing a harvest of rich and varied literature, whose works have been accepted by all subsequent generations as models of excellence. The tenth book of Quintilian's *Institutions* is devoted to the citation and commendation of writers of Latin worthy to be set side by side with the canonic writers of Greek. And the business of the Latin grammarians, as of the Greek, was to teach all the nations of the Roman world the laws of this language according to the usage of these classical authors. *Ars grammatica est norma recte loquendi et scribendi*. 'Grammar consists in the understanding of poets and historians and in the method of writing and speaking correctly.' This is the note sounded by them all. I mention one by name, Donatus, who flourished in the middle of the fourth century. He bequeathed to subsequent ages two treatises—*Ars Grammatica* and *Ara Grammatica Minor*. The latter sets out the subject in the form of a catechism, which teachers found so convenient and for them labour-saving that it rivals in longevity the grammar of Dionysius. Indeed a Donat came to be a commonly accepted term for a grammar. In his larger treatise Donatus enumerates thirteen vices of style or usage, and it is interesting and amusing to note that a majority of his offensive examples are drawn from the sacrosanct and irreproachable Virgil. Here we see the grammarian no longer content to find correctness in the classics but beginning to presume to impose upon them his own notion of it. As we shall see, this dictatorial attitude has proved an alluring and dangerous precedent. The general attitude of the ancient grammarians is, however, respectful, even worshipful, rather than critical. It is admirably exemplified and summed up in an exhortation addressed to his student monks by the grammarian Cassiodorus. 'Now', he says, 'lift up your hearts as you read and rejoice that from the past have come down to you authors so splendid that you may trust them with no dubiety of mind'.

So far as Latin and Greek are concerned, the relationship between the languages and their expositors is clear and simple. In each case there was a small corpus of literature, remarkably uniform in texture, which served the grammarians both as the source of their rules and as the court of appeal for their justification. Consequently they had solid ground for their claim that their business was to teach correctness, and some ground—perhaps less solid—for their further claim that grammar, the first of the liberal arts, was the golden gateway leading to all knowledge and all wisdom.

I pass now to our own language—English. Until comparatively

recent times British education has rested on the assumption that a sufficient knowledge of the English language comes from the daily use of it. Where grammar was taught, as at all Grammar Schools, it was taught through Latin. Consequently English Grammars have been late in appearing; and, when they did appear, they came from enthusiastic dogmatists who were rarely scholars.

One of the earliest English grammars is Ben Jonson's. 'Grammar', he says, 'is the art of true and well speaking language; the writing is but an accident.' As one would expect, he follows closely the Latin grammar, his model being Scaliger's; as one would hardly expect, the substance of his brief treatise is trivial and very elementary.

A much more meaty production is William Cobbett's, of date 1823. It is intended 'for the use of soldiers, sailors, apprentices, and ploughboys', a subordinate purpose being 'to prevent statesmen from using false grammar'. It is composed in the form of letters to his young son James, whom he is 'extremely desirous to see regarded with respect'. As one would expect from Cobbett's robust and cocksure cast of mind, he gives James a quantity of advice—always vigorous, frequently sound, sometimes comically erroneous.

'The word *it* my dear James, is the greatest troubler that I know of in language . . . Never put an *it* upon paper without thinking well of what you are about. When I see many *its* in a page, I always tremble for the writer.' By way of contrast to this admirable doctrine I give you one other extract. 'There is an erroneous way of employing *whom* which I must point out for your particular attention, because it is so often seen in very good writers and because it is very deceiving. "The Duke of Argyll, than whom no man was more hearty in the cause." A hundred such phrases might be collected. Yet they are bad grammar. In all such cases *who* should be made use of. "Beelzebub, than whom, Satan except, none higher stood." We cannot regard as a reason the example of Milton, who has committed 100's, if not 1,000's, of grammatical errors.' Clearly kowtowing to classical authority was not Cobbett's way.

One of the most popular of English grammars in its time is Lindley Murray's. Of the soundness of his judgement I give you one specimen. 'Sometimes', he says, 'a writer runs on in a specious verbosity, amusing his reader with synonymous terms and identical propositions, well turned periods, and high sounding words; but at the same time using these words so indefinitely that the reader

can either affix no meaning at all to them, or may affix almost any meaning he pleases.' The interest of this reference lies in the example that Murray cites as illustrative nonsense—the magnificent opening of Dryden's magnificent Ode for St. Cecilia's day: 'From harmony, from heavenly harmony, this universal frame began'. On this Murray's light-shedding comment is this—"The following is a poetical example of this nature, in which there is scarcely a glimpse of meaning.'

Another grammar, even more popular than Murray's, is William Lennie's, of which I have the 24th edition, issued in 1844. The profundity of Lennie's scholarship may be judged from the following citations:

(1) "The first and second pages are torn." This I think improper. It should be "The first and second page are torn."

(2) 'An adjective should not be separated from its noun. Thus "a large enough number" should be "a number large enough."

(3) "When that the poor have cried, Caesar hath wept." The style is here narrative; Caesar was dead. It should therefore be "When the poor cried, Caesar wept."

While I am thus rudely stirring the bones of the dead, academic piety requires of me some mention of the grammar on which I was nurtured in my youth, Alexander Bain's. Bain had a mind at once acute and comprehensive in its grasp, admirably suited to organize and systematize masses of detail, and consequently well suited to deal with grammatical problems in so far as they are amenable to logical treatment. The longevity of his work in grammar has been partly affected from the fact that he lived at a time when the history of the language had not yet been adequately investigated. The severe logicity of his mind was also in some respects a positive disqualification. In language there are many vagaries and quaintnesses and irregularities, for whose just estimation a certain measure of amused forbearance is needed, possibly even of sympathetic affection.

Of the temper of his mind I content myself with one illustration—his insistence on assigning separate functions to the relative pronouns *who* and *which*, on the one hand, and *that*, on the other. '*That*', he contends, 'is the proper restrictive, explicative, limiting, or defining relative. Many good writers use *who* and *which* for the restrictive meaning. This mixture of usages should be discouraged; and *that* should be put forward as the sole proper representative of restriction. We might urge the variety attainable by this distinction; but the great argument for the separation of functions is the avoidance of ambiguity.' The last phrase strikes the keynote

of Bain's grammar: the supreme quality of speech and writing is perspicuity. Granted that perspicuity is an important quality, it does not stand alone. The needs of our rulers and governors—the politicians—must be allowed for; and there are other qualities than clarity that are possibly even more determinative of the moulds of human utterance. As regards the point in question, it may be noted that the normal English form of the Latin *ii qui* is *those who*, and not either of the two alternatives—*those that* and *they that*. In this preference the determining quality seems to be euphony. It may be further noted that the pronoun *that* labours under a serious disadvantage since it cannot be preceded by a preposition—‘the zeal with which he laboured for the public good, the fortitude with which he endured every private calamity, the lofty disdain with which he looked on temptations and dangers’. In such a period as this the substitution of *that* for *which* renders the sentence ludicrous. The inability of *that* to occupy the whole restrictive field is apparent also in sentences containing such vigorous combinations as ‘by which and for which’ and ‘in whom and through whom and by whom’. In all such cases the only suggestion that Bain has to offer to Macaulay and other ‘good’ writers is that the sentences should be recast in the interest of perspicuity.

One other note—In the Authorized Version we read ‘God said “Let there be light”, and there was light’. For the sake of greater brevity Bain said ‘Light be; light is’.

So far as we have dipped into grammars of English, we have found a meagre and grudging recognition of the authority of good writers, who are usually unnamed, and therewith a habit of dogmatizing out of the plenitude sometimes of an imperfect knowledge.

After this long and tedious preamble I come now to our own time. What is the material that the modern grammarians use and appeal to? And what is the attitude that they assume towards it?

With one party among the moderns the slogan is ‘Spoken English’. The superior qualities claimed for it are virility and vitality; and the appropriate contrast is found either in Commercial English, with its peculiar jargon; or in Newspaper English, with its outworn clichés; or in Blue-book English—might I say inspectorial English?—whose outstanding characteristic is a stark rigidity. This inclination towards spoken English has been both facilitated and accelerated by the modern development of the science of phonetics, which has released us from the tyranny of the alphabetic letters and provided us with an apparatus for representing

the sounds of speech with something like scientific accuracy. English is spoken by a vast multitude of individual persons estimated at 160,000,000. It is spoken by a large number of groups of persons, most of whose constituents are mutually unintelligible. Among these group varieties are the English of Uncle Remus, the English of the Pacific Islanders, the pidgin English of the Chinese coast. Specially important are the local dialects of the mother country—from Shetland through Buchan and Lancashire to Dorset and Somerset; and a large share of the modern emphasis on spoken English is being happily directed to the investigation and recording of these dialectic varieties. But the main emphasis on spoken English is on standard spoken English. One of its leading exponents is Mr. Daniel Jones. His name for it is Public School English, and his *English Pronouncing Dictionary* gives what he calls Public School Pronunciation. 'It is', he explains, 'the English spoken by the families whose menfolk have been educated at the Public Schools. The pronunciation here recorded', he continues, 'will probably commend itself to those foreigners whose object is to converse on terms of equality with the families referred to.'

In my opinion an unbiassed recorder of spoken English should recognize several varieties of English as Standard English. To Public School English I should add at least three others—English as spoken by educated people in Scotland, in Ireland, and in North America. Of our own Scottish speech I do not need to speak in Aberdeen; of Irish speech I cannot, because I am not acquainted with it. On each of the other two varieties I make a brief comment.

In Public School English I note four points: (1) the diphthongization of most of the long vowels, particularly of the vowels *ā* and *ō*; (2) the disuse of the trilled *r* and the consequent reduction of medial and final *er*, *ir*, and *ur* to a single sound, the so-called indeterminate vowel; (3) the absence of the back fricative, represented by *ch* and *gh*; and (4) the voicing of unvoiced *w* in the words beginning with *wh*. To these vocal characteristics may be added the *shall* and *will*, *should* and *would*, complexity. To my ear Public School English is exceedingly pleasant to listen to. The muscular effort of the speech organs is reduced to a minimum, and the sounds issue with delightful fluency and ease in a succession of smooth-flowing waves, the peaks of which are the strongly accented syllables. One may put it otherwise and say that the separate sounds all tend to be blurred, the vowels by a following off-glide and the consonants by an unusual gentleness of touch at the points of friction or stoppage.

The latest account of American English is by Professor Krapp, who has produced two large octavo volumes on the subject. General statements are difficult for a whole continent; but I note five characteristics: (1) Diphthongization of the long vowels is less marked than in Public School English; *ā* and *ō*, in particular, usually remain pure. (2) *R* is more alive than in Public School English. A common form is the inverted *r*, with which we are familiar in the mouths of Gaelic speakers. (3) Initial *wh* is occasionally voiced throughout the continent at all social levels, but the common form and the form commended by American grammarians is the unvoiced *w*. (4) After certain consonants the omission of the *y* glide before long *u* is 'widely current in the speech of persons of undoubted cultivation', e.g. 'toon', 'toob', 'nood'. Here it is interesting to note that (as recorded by Lord Frederick Hamilton) Mr. Gladstone always spoke of 'constitootional' and of 'noos'. (5) The nasal cavity is habitually added to the resonance chamber; hence the so-called American twang. You will have noted that in respect of the first three points American English is nearer to standard Scottish than to Public School English. As in Scotland too, I may add, the auxiliary *will* is usually found sufficient for the future tense in all three persons.

Most of my audience, I take it, are teachers. As teachers we are professionally concerned with the speaking of English, with our own speech in the first place—inside the classroom at least—and still more with the speech that we are endeavouring to get our pupils to produce. What is to be our choice? Public School English or Scottish English or Aberdeen English? First of all we must accept as a fundamental fact that speech distinctions rest on class distinctions. In Aberdeen the speech of the Gallowgate is different from that of Rubislaw Den, and in Glasgow the speech of the Cowcaddens from that of Kelvinside. And the most conspicuous example of a speech resting on a purely class basis is Public School English. But a second fundamental fact is the democratic temper of the present age, which is opposed to class distinctions; and this second fact is producing changes in the attitude to differences of speech that are plain to see. The lamentable death of the *Edinburgh Review* has recalled to my mind the period in the eighteenth and early nineteenth century when Edinburgh was a notable literary centre, attracting to its service not native talent only (which was then abundant) but also a number of illustrious English writers. And a conspicuous feature of the period was the anxious solicitude displayed by the Scottish writers about their English. They revised and re-revised their scripts with

microscopic care in order to strike out what they called Scotisms. Nor did the practice die with them. Even I, in my youth, was warned by Bain not to say 'Kindle a fire' or 'Give me a drink' or 'Roasted cheese' or 'A winding stair' or 'Tell the boy to come in'. What has come about through the influence of democracy is what I may call the emancipation of the provinces from subservience to London and the south-east. One result is that the Lossiemouth flavour of Ramsay Macdonald's speech or the Yorkshire flavour of Snowden's is everywhere felt to be an integral part of the man himself and rather to add weight to his words than to depreciate them. To the majority of Scotsmen, I venture to think, this emancipation is particularly grateful, as few of us take kindly to alien modes of utterance. In so far as we may have occasion to seek to modify our own speech, our aim should be the best of our respective neighbourhoods; and the guidance of our children's speech should be towards the same end.

One other point I should like to make before leaving spoken English. I have already referred to the phonetic alphabet. This has been extensively used by Jones, Rippmann, and others for the production of phonetic Public School English texts, for the use mainly of foreigners; and there are not wanting enthusiastic reformers who look forward to its acceptance as the standard form of English spelling. Certainly our spelling is at once antiquated and chaotic and stands sorely in need of reform; but to any proposal to phonetize it on the basis of any variety of standard spoken English I am strongly opposed, especially to standardization on the basis of Public School English. Apart from its immense social prestige, which we must all recognize, this form seems to me the least suitable on which to base an international spelling. One forbidding fact is the contrast between the narrow limits of its class basis and the 100 millions of English-speaking America. Besides, from the features I have already indicated, Public School English is manifestly farther removed than any other variety from the pronunciation indicated by our present spelling. The lines too along which it has moved are markedly divergent from the speech habits of continental Europe—from those of the French, with their rolling *r*'s and general vigour of consonants; and from those of the Teutons, with their equally vigorous *ich*'s and *ach*'s. Therefore it seems to me a matter for regret that Scotland is so small and the people of Scotland so modest and self-effacing. Were our national character other than it is, we should boldly proclaim standard Scottish speech as demonstrably the best model for foreigners, even for the world, to follow.

As regards spelling reform, the only line that, in my opinion, it can take with any sure hope of general acceptance is the line indicated by the changes already established in America. One is sometimes tempted, out of sheer despair, to wish for a return to the freedom of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, when every man spelled as he thought fit; but among all the literate peoples of the world the notion is now established ineradicably that there is such a thing as correct spelling, and therewith the consequent notion that it is a primary duty of the School to teach it. The imperfect measure of our success in discharging this duty is known to all of you, and what is urgently needed in this island is an acceptance by us of the changes made in America and, in concert with America, a further extension of them.

I return once more to the advocates of spoken English. The claim made for it, as I have said, is that it is virile and vital. By vital is meant, I take it, creative; and what the spoken language creates is new words, new uses of old words, new phrases, and new turns of old phrases. In other words, the spoken language is most vital when it is producing what we call slang. Now slang is a very interesting phenomenon because it is a very queer thing. One queer thing about it is that only rarely does an observer note a slang expression at its birth. The method of its diffusion too is wrapt in an equal mystery. A recent phrase for drunk, e.g., is 'One over eight' or 'One over the eights'. Eight what? and why over eight? Does any one of you know? I don't. There is, however, one fact about slang that is quite certain—its fugacious and ephemeral nature. Freshness is of its very essence; slang terms are the mayflies of language; by the time they get themselves recorded in a dictionary, they are already museum specimens. It is true, that a few—a very few—examples of slang—*mob* is perhaps the most notable—are taken up into the literary language; but the proportion of these graduations is small, far too small to justify the student of spoken language in giving any serious or prolonged attention to this phase of speech.

When the modern grammarian directs our attention to the superior quality of spoken English, he means something quite different from slang, some form of standard English as actually spoken. Now, if slang is a creature of a day, the spoken word is a creature of a moment. How is the student to catch it as it flies? How is he to pin down and fix his material? True he has a knowledge—more or less insecure—of what he would himself say in this case or in that. He has too a memory—more or less treacherous—of what he has heard others say in this case or in that. But these

together form a very slender basis of operations, and dogmata resting on it seem likely to be lacking in convincing power.

For the resolving of this difficulty I turn to one of the ablest advocates of spoken English, Otto Jespersen, an exceptionally erudite and interesting grammarian. 'The spoken and heard word', he tells us 'is the primary form for language, and of far greater importance than the secondary form used in writing and reading. We shall never be able to understand what language is and how it develops if we do not take into consideration first and foremost the activity of speaking and hearing, and if we forget for a moment that writing is only a substitute for speaking.' When asked by Coleridge whether he had ever heard him preach, Lamb replied that he never did anything else. The same may be said of Carlyle. But the notion that Gibbon, for instance, wrote down his history in default of an audience to speak it to is ludicrous. My concern, however, for the moment is with Jespersen's method of applying his thesis in practice. Jespersen is a Dane, a professor in the university of Copenhagen. In his books he displays a comprehensive acquaintance with nearly all the languages in Europe. His knowledge of the English language at all stages of its history is nothing short of marvellous. He is also a modern scientific grammarian and as such must produce the evidence for his generalizations. This he does with painstaking accuracy and completeness. Where then does he find the necessary evidence for the usages of spoken English? He finds it in drama and in the dialogue portions of the literature, particularly in novels. Here several questions suggest themselves to me, all of which I set aside save one, viz. whether printed dialogue may be taken as a fair average representation of English as it is spoken by educated people in everyday life. The unhesitating answer is No. If it were, neither dramatist nor novelist would wax fat on his royalties.

How beautifully blue the sky!
The glass is rising very high,
—Yet people say (I know not why)
That we shall have a warm July.

There you have the staple of ordinary conversation, nearly always deplorably dull and uninteresting to an alien overhearer. Ordinary conversation among educated people I contend is nothing other than standard English with the special characteristics of ellipsis, truncation, brevity, and a pervasive carelessness. Written drama and written dialogue is ordinary speech transmuted, Bottom-like translated, raised to a higher level, the level of literature. So far

from finding his essential models in spoken English, the grammarian has to seek for an account of the ellipses of spoken English, its abbreviations, its carelessnesses, by a reference to the real standard, which is contained in the great corpus of English literature.

Before leaving Jespersen I give you one example of the length to which he is sometimes carried by his fundamental thesis, his discussion of a usage, of which his own model example is this sentence: 'We feed children whom we think are hungry.' 'All books on correct English', he continues 'look upon the use of *whom* as a gross error, the reasoning being evidently this: the relative *who* is the subject of *are hungry*. A subject should stand in the nominative. *We think* is an insertion that cannot change anything in the relation between the pronoun and its verb *are*. *Who*, not *whom*, is the nominative. Ergo: the sentence should be: "We feed children whom we think are hungry".' Jespersen next proceeds to illustrate the usage from old English, from the Authorized Version, from Shakespeare, from a long list of novelists and letter-writers, right down through the ages to the *Times Literary Supplement*. The conclusion of his argument is this: 'A subject need not always be in the nominative, and the insertion of the words *we think* can and does change the relation between the relative pronoun and its verb.' The explanation of the usage is of course obvious, the proximity of *who* to the verb *think*; and, so far as the modern authors cited by Jespersen are concerned, the error has been committed either of express purpose or out of pure carelessness or out of a lamentable and disgraceful ignorance of grammar.

To another modern attitude to grammar I can allow myself only a passing reference. It is maintained by some that the grammarian has no title to sit in the seat of judgement: his proper place is the post of observer and recorder; his business is to note and classify and explain usages, not to appraise them. This attitude may be appropriate to the historical grammarian, though even he must surely sometimes employ such significant adjectives as *usual* and *occasional* and *rare*; but it can never be the attitude of the compiler of school grammars or of the teacher of grammar, for the simple reason that in every department of school work (I say particularly in grammar) effective pedagogy necessarily calls for a certain amount of dogmatism.

I have already reached the conservative conclusion that the material of the grammarian is to be found in the corpus of English literature. The last question I ask is this: Does this corpus possess a uniformity of texture or structure similar to that possessed by the

great classical literatures? I confidently claim that it does. Change, I readily admit is characteristic of everything human; but, if anything human can be said to be obstinately resistant to change, it is a great language resting on a great literature. It stands like Teneriffe or Atlas unremoved. I have already remarked on the longevity of Attic Greek, on the longevity of Latin. May we not count on a span at least as great for English?

In claiming uniformity and constancy for English, I do not refer to vocabulary. Polyglot in its origin, English, unlike French and German, has always been forward to admit to its franchise any gloss likely to be of service; and this liberality is at once one explanation of its rapid expansion over the earth and a ground for confidence in its perpetuity. The uniformity I claim for it is uniformity of texture. I do not claim that the uniformity is perfect. I admit that a teacher of English is allowed either to freely advise his pupils to confidently and without any hesitation split every infinitive for which a suitable wedge of an adverb is to hand, or to damn the usage to his heart's content. I admit also that Americans belong in the human race, that they help each other balance their accounts, and occasionally allow their children ride rough-shod over them. But these are minor variations. Whether produced in Britain, or in California, or in Sydney, English prose is essentially the same in texture. This I have certainly found true of the blue-book English on which I have been accustomed to browse. I mention two cheerful and encouraging evidences from America. The first is a matter of to-day—the striking contrast between the scething billows of American slang and the steadfast pillar of literary English, against which the former beat unceasingly in vain. The other is a matter of history. For generations after the States secured their independence, they were separated from Britain by the Atlantic and the hatred engendered by war. One of the ambitions fostered by this hostility was the ambition to create an American language that would in name as well as in power separate them from the step-mother country. One of its advocates, John Adams, went even further. ‘Perhaps’, said he, ‘the British King and parliament may have the honour of copying our example. This I should admire. England will never more have any honor excepting now and then that of imitating the Americans.’ Even this so ardent separatism did not and could not possibly make any headway against the overwhelming influence of Bunyan, of the Authorized Version, of Jeremy Taylor, of Shakespeare. When Wendell Holmes lay dying, he was visited by Russell Lowell. To the

inquiry how he felt, his reply was 'I don't know and I don't care. I'm reading Rob Roy.'

Happily the old enmity between America and Britain is now melting into friendship, never, we believe to return; and the strongest assurance that we have of perpetual peace among the English-speaking peoples rests on a bed-rock basis. We are all one because of our common possession of the great heritage of our literature. The conveyance of this heritage from one generation to the next rests for the most part in the hands of the mothers of the race and of their deputies, the teachers. Hitherto a full entrance into this estate has been confined to a select educated few, but advances are rapidly being made towards a liberal education for the whole of the nation. In the carrying forward of this great purpose I submit a plea for three abundances that I have near to my heart—abundance of books, abundance of speaking, and abundance of writing. I declare as an unquestionable fact that, even to-day, most of our children suffer from book starvation. I plead for greater liberality, especially for the youngest. Most of our children speak a language that is something other than standard English, even than local standard English. They will learn to speak English only by trying, and they will try only if allowed to do so freely without much correction of faults. Under present school conditions the scope for individual oral expression is necessarily limited; but we may confidently hope that it will gradually become larger and larger, with a gradual reduction of armaments and a corresponding reduction of the size of classes. So with facility in writing: the first thing and the chief thing to aim at is a copious flow. This secured, all the rest is easy; and to secure it I should postpone as long as possible the shaping of the material. As an instructive parallel I commend to your consideration the course of the Nile—in its infant and junior reaches, a torrent, pouring down from cataract to cataract; in the senior and advanced, a full stream, guided this way and that into fructifying rivulets and runnels.

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THE CLAIM OF OUR
MOTHER TONGUE

By the Rev. the Hon.

EDWARD LYTTTELTON, D.D.

March 1934

THE CLAIM OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE

HOW can a thing which we men have created and day by day use for our own purposes have a claim on us? May we not do what we like with our own?

Probably this sort of question to any member of the English Association will seem rather childish. The answer, anyhow, is simple. We have a duty towards our language as we have towards anything that is beautiful; that is, to preserve it; to prevent it from being spoilt. So far we should all agree; and further that we have here the chief reason for the existence of our Association: namely, to remind our countrymen of the glory of our heritage; to bring before them the wonders of our national literature, and by means of careful criticism to separate the tinsel from the gold. Admirably has this task been undertaken by many whose contributions are kept safe in the archives of the Association or have been promulgated to a wider world.

My purpose to-day is a humbler and more restricted one. It is to point out some instances not only of mistakes in modern English which every educated man knows or can recognize as mistakes of grammar, prosody, or uglinesses of diction, but of random falsification of the meaning of words which has the disastrous effect of impoverishing the language. This I will explain directly; but there is a further purpose in view: namely, to suggest a specific line of action to which the Association is called: that is, briefly, to take measures for the checking of a process that is always going on, in the hope that a group of men with the authority to speak may utter warnings which shall not be in vain, though they be addressed to a remarkably heedless multitude. For is it not a formidable fact that the future of the great English language depends on the use of words by millions of people quite as unwilling as any other race of mankind to think before they speak?

The first subject then before us is mischief going on: what is it, and how does it work?

The Mischief

Some fifty years ago we were all taught by the scholar-poet, Archbishop Trench, that words have a history. Like living men and women they come into being, but nobody quite knows how or why or even when. As Bishop Westcott remarked, there is a veil over all beginnings. An apparent exception is when an individual

by some noteworthy conduct adds his name to the number of pre-existing words as a way of describing similar conduct or situations for all time. How little did the much-vexed Irishman, Captain Boycott, dream that by his constancy he was going to enrich our language by a new word: that word is simply his name, and the use of it is vigorously spreading. The immortalizing of that name required no sumptuous monument, no 'star-ypointing pyramid' or laboriously compiled biography. Will the name of William Shakespeare last longer than this Captain's? and let us notice that by his bravery he affected human language for good; while the conceited German Emperor Sigismund (as Mahaffy remarked) tried vainly to injure it by violating a rule of grammar.

But we have to consider the grim fact that the history of single words is far oftener a story of degradation than of upraising. The most conspicuous example of the latter is *humility*, borrowed from a Latin word of disparagement but raised to express almost the greatest and most attractive of the Christian virtues. Both in Latin and Greek the word that was used to denote mean-mindedness suddenly came to mean the freedom from the tyranny of the Ego; not a negative but a positive virtue. The time came when a new word was required to express a new thing, a kind of goodness which may possibly have existed in Athens or Rome, unrecognized. When it was, no one could invent a new word, and in each centre a word for centuries condemned to base uses was clothed with a new dignity and elevated to great and lasting honour. Thereby hangs a tale; but we must pass on to reflect on the tragic story of the word *awful*. It is a sharply contrasted instance of a symbol of a great mystery rapidly sinking down to an expression of uttermost triviality and almost nothingness.

Awful originally meant that which inspires the spectator or hearer with the solemn feeling of awe. In a superb passage in his immortal sermon on 'Nature', J. B. Mozley dwells on the wonder of the feeling of awe being a pleasurable sensation; and how that the desire for it spurs idle and vacuous-minded men to travel thousands of miles in order to stimulate this feeling which somehow has grown torpid, 'pursy and slow', in the twentieth century. The instinct of awe is with us still, but it is ignored, and millions of English people have never heard the word since the Industrial Revolution has worked its effect. To-day, if you were to use the word on a platform the audience would automatically spell it O-R-E! and yet every newspaper that we read shows us that the metal is understood no more than the sensation.

Notice again that when the word was degraded it became a lie.

No one of us can live a week in London without hearing some demonstrative young person say, 'How awfully kind of you.' But no human kindness stirs the feeling of awe, though the Divine Kindness does. The random talker has told a lie and will do so again several times a day. But did we not learn from the late Monsieur Coué that the constant repetition of an assertion produces a physical effect? If so, this repetition certainly will produce a mental effect, presumably a baneful one.

Well, you will say, that may be true, but it is too late to do anything now. I grant it; but the tragedy may teach us a salutary lesson. When a great word is degraded, man has exercised his mysterious power, which is almost creative, and at the same time destructive. One generation of chatterboxes has added a silly word to our vocabulary and destroyed a noble and indispensable one. But it so happens that another word has been given us which covers, or used to cover, some of the same ground: that is *tremendous*. It was meant to express that which makes us tremble. But as we have lost the power of trembling just as we have lost the sensation of awe, the same fell instinct which handed the first word over to the tattlers of English-speaking people is now operating on the second. *Tremendous* has come to mean almost nothing, but is intended to give a vague impression of emphasis and is used by writers and speakers in the sanguine hope of stirring the emotions of their fellow citizens about something which cannot be stated with clearness and precision. I once heard an impassioned lady pleading for some charity on a platform. She spoke for ten minutes and used the word *tremendous* twenty-one times, and each time wrongly. At the end we apprehended an attack of ear-ache, and in self-defence we drove out of our minds, not only the hammer-strokes of a misused word, but all that she had been saying, whether intelligibly or not; and now of what she had been pleading for I have no idea whatever.

But a far more arresting instance is the following. It was no ebullient orator striving to stir the apathy of a Chelsea audience at three p.m. in summer time, but an accomplished penman writing in a magazine often acknowledged to be the best written of all our magazines—*The Round Table*—who perpetrated the following enormity. 'This would be a tremendous guarantee of peace.' Think what the world would be if that statement were approximately true! A guarantee of peace which would make us all tremble! We Englishmen, I take it, know very little about trembling. We went into the Great War without trembling; but half-way through somebody must have trembled, or the League of

Nations would not have been formed to establish peace on earth to save us all from ever thinking of trembling again. Yet in this fine magazine we read of a 'tremendous guarantee of peace'. Great Homer never nodded so conspicuously or so disastrously as this. Let us see what has happened.

There is a group of words, of which *tremendous* is one, which depend for their effect on being used rarely. If they are used again and again they come to suggest a state of things the very opposite of what is true. Take, for instance, this singular fact. A newspaper—I am told very widely read—advertises at the tail end of our otherwise harmless omnibuses that something *amazing* has occurred, in London or not far away, at Brixton or Pangbourne or Southend; that is to say, if a citizen spends a penny wisely and reads about the event, the reward is promised that he will be amazed. To be amazed is to be stupefied. But why should I spend a penny to be made stupider—if possible—than before? Of course what has really happened is not amazing at all, but when the news for the evening issue is dull the editor has to pretend that one item—it doesn't in the least matter which—is such as will dull the senses with a shock like a stunning blow.

Look too at that word *stunning*. I can't pretend to say what has brought it about that the effect on you if you are run down by a motor should be denoted by a word which by schoolboys mainly is used to mean 'delightful'. Again we notice that a misuse of an important word is to tell an untruth. Now I am not concerned to insist on the ethical effect of all this lying, but merely to point out that the community is busily engaged in ousting one important word after another simply by heedless and reiterated misuse.

There is one more great word in jeopardy, and I suppose no one of us is quite free from the guilt of misusing it: the word 'wonderful'. Not long ago a man of remarkable force of character and of intellectual power above the average of so-called educated men, died; and in an obituary notice in *The Times* deliberately written by a great scholar he was described as 'a very wonderful man'. Consider what this means. The appearance among us of such a man as this is far from being such as to provoke a great amount of wonder: for it is in reality not wonderful at all. Ever since mankind has been on this earth every generation has produced several men whose force of character made them worth noticing; that is, remarkable but not wonderful. The wonder would be if the whole of any one generation were of a dead level of character. The addition of the word 'very' intensifies the falsehood. What is meant is 'unusual', and even that would often be too strong. If an octogenarian walks

three miles a day he is called wonderful by kind people who wish to be civil to him, possibly for interested motives. The effect of this slushy talk is no laughing matter. The faculty of wonder is certainly dulled in a society where the word is constantly misapplied. But what is to become of us as a nation if we cease to wonder? Already, it has often been remarked, the multiplication of new inventions has stifled our faculty of being surprised; just as in the War the emotion of horror was dulled by familiarity with ghastly happenings. So I maintain the nauseating use of the expression 'wonderful' deprives us of a great word which when vulgarized becomes unavailable for the use for which it was born. If we have no word wherewith to rouse each other's sense of wonder—the parent of philosophy and an integral part of the religious sense—the emotion itself is weakened and starved, and the loss to our equipment for the quest of the Higher Life must be incalculable.

Buoyed up, therefore, by the hope of some authority some day stepping in to arrest the spoiling of our heritage, let me briefly indicate a few questions the answers to which seem very uncertain. Their importance is slight compared with those already mentioned. They are not of paramount urgency but of some interest. When we take a word from the Greek like *ethics*, and others ending in *ics*, are they singular or plural? Does the curious fact that in Greek neuter plurals used to take the singular person of the verb affect our usage now? No doubt only a minority of us talk about ethics, but a very large number play golf. Well then, are we to say the links *are* poor or *is* poor? Authorities are divided, and there is no unanimity even in moments of deep emotion.

Old men can remember the cold reception given to *reliable* when it came into England, I believe, from over the water. It was said that the word violated grammar, for we say *rely on* not *rely* alone; but the same argument applies to the unassailable word *available*. I suggest that the objection to *reliable* is that it is an exact synonym for the fine old word *trustworthy*, which in obedience to some sinister influence seems to be yielding ground to the American. Is not this a pity? As to synonyms, is it too late to stamp upon *commence* instead of *begin*? French words, let it be noticed, often denote a latent desire to be what is called genteel. So a damsel in a High School not long ago, narrating the Parable of the Talents, wrote of the bad servant that he hid his talent in a *serviette*! A foreign word which has been objected to but which seems to express something in its own right is *standpoint*. It may be too late to debar it from our vocabulary, and if so let us use it

THE CLAIM OF OUR MOTHER TONGUE

without demur. It would be a relief to have the question decided for us.

Some usages of language raise interesting questions of ethics and custom. About fifteen years ago a writer in *The Times* used the relative pronoun *who* in reference to a horse. Ought *who* to be restricted to persons, and is a horse a person? Historians, anyhow, should note the fact; for I doubt if a hundred and twenty years ago, when a speaker in Parliament was hooted at for talking of the 'rights of animals', such an expression would have been possible.

Andrew Lang was caustic in his comments on the very common pleonasm, *This instance is a good one*, instead of *is good*. On the other hand two of the very highest authorities, J. H. Newman and Archbishop Trench, have both committed themselves to *under these circumstances*. The supreme translator in Latin and Greek, R. C. Jebb, used to lament the intrusion of the word *calculated* instead of *likely* into otherwise good writing; especially when it was preceded, as it often is, by the ugly adverb *eminently*. A speaker who says *eminently calculated* when he means *very likely* is wasting breath, for the want of which he will die some day. Jebb also, when he took to politics, was amused at the daring but irrevocably adopted use of the participle *arising* in one connexion. Any day in a formal committee meeting one may hear the phrase 'arising out of the Minutes, Mr. Chairman, may we not consider, &c.' Strictly speaking, that means that either the speaker or the chairman, or both, are arising out of Minutes. To what altitude may we hope they will attain? One need not be a writer of the eminence of Newman or Jebb to be pained at some expressions we are nowadays condemned to read or hear. I never shall forget the horror betrayed by the late highly accomplished member of our Association, Mr. John Bailey, when he was told of the linguistic effort of a young Oxonian from Overseas. He was an aspirant to literary fame, and on being told by his tutor that his style lacked colour he took the hint gallantly and began his next essay with the words 'Shakespeare had oceans of vim'. Bailey, though easily amused, was by this only disgusted, and we wished we had not told him.

It is worth considering if there is not a principle on which we may regulate the introduction of French words such as *bizarre* (which I believe comes from the very interesting Basque people) and *debonnair*. Do these words express something which no English word does? I should say they do, but am not sure. A word which to some of us is a mere nuisance is *intriguing*, and it will remain a nuisance till its meaning is more securely fixed than it is now.

Again, there is a very curious process going on which shows itself in a random use of prepositions. Scholars of the New Testament Greek have long discovered that as classical Greek sank into what is called Hellenistic Greek several prepositions came to be used so widely that they might mean almost anything. Now is it a sign of decay that something similar is in these days going on with us? Not long ago some interesting instances were given in *The Times*. The harmless little word 'up' has come in for hard treatment, and for years has been added to the imperative mood of sundry verbs to give emphasis to the injunction, though its proper meaning vanishes altogether. Why should 'play up' heard on the football field have a more bracing effect on the energies than simply *play*, or perhaps *play down*. At first the novelty attracts attention, but to what? Why, to the words used and not to the thing commanded. We remember the instance of a great English athlete and pastor of boyhood, Vassall of Repton, who, when in the middle of reading house prayers to his youthful and irresponsible flock, suddenly turned and testily cried, 'Here, pray up, you fellows!' No doubt there was a momentary effect, but was it the effect desired? I doubt it. Think too of the mystery of the expression, colloquial if not slang, *hard up*. Why *up*? Why not *down*? Who first put the two words together to mean something which separately they could not mean?

One more conundrum, the answer to which seems very recon-dite. What can have been the origin of the very curious but conventional expression which I dare say is used a hundred thousand times every week-day, 'Has the postman been?' What would the imaginary visitor to our earth from Mars, who had learnt English, suppose to be taking place, the first time he heard the question asked? He would soon have learnt that Englishmen have little or no taste for metaphysics; yet he could not have failed to hear, emanating from the mouths of people who never for a moment have doubted the local postman's existence, a question implying that all previous experience of that patient functionary may have been an hallucination, and the functionary himself no better than a phantom. Yet the moment the postman behaves as a phantom by coming ten minutes late angry murmurs are heard and pater-familias meditates a letter to *The Times*. All this is hard to explain. We notice that the same liberty is taken with the verb *to be*, when some one says, 'I have been to Brighton'; but the licence is not so daring, owing to the similarity between the wrong phrase and the correct one, 'I have been at Brighton.' The wrong use is confined to the past participle.

An acute friend tells me he has seen the phrase 'a hollow victory' used twice in the same number of *The Times*, meaning in the one case a decisive victory, e.g. in a football match; in the other almost the exact opposite: a Pyrrhic victory; or one that cost too much to be profitable.

Lastly, why should 'exterminate', which once meant 'banish', be used to mean 'destroy' or 'uproot', while 'extirpate', which does mean 'uproot', is dying for want of use, or rather eating its head off round the corner?

One more very awkward situation has been created by a random use of the superlative. An affectionate husband the first time he was parted from his wife, wrote to her, as 'Dearest Maria'. The lady, who must have had a grammarian's mind, wrote furiously back charging her liege lord with infidelity, since the word 'dearest' clearly implied there were other Marias nearly as dear as herself. What was he to say?

A still more modern development of speech is the fashionable phrase for expressive thankfulness, irrespective of whether the sensation indicated, is gratitude or the opposite. Why should I say 'Thanks very much' for the tiniest attention from any one? I find myself debarred from any form of words expressing sincere gratitude, for all possible expressions have been ear-marked for the most trivial acknowledgements; as when a sandwich-man tells me he does not know the way to Goodge Street, or when a barber's boy offers me a towel after thinning my hair. Again we notice that slushy talk impoverishes our speech, for the dwindling minority of sensible people.

'The use of language,' said some wag long ago, 'is to conceal our thoughts.' If that were true, it would be our duty to join the large group of those who go about with lies. But all the time we wish to safeguard our speech from the corroding influence of confused thought and unrecognized falsehood. In this connexion I will pass on an anecdote of Disraeli told me by Thorold Rogers fifty-five years ago.

Robert Browning happened to be sitting next Disraeli at an Academy banquet, the walls of the Chamber being hung with the latest efforts of our young artists. During the meal the Prime Minister indulged in very caustic comments on these pictures, but when he came to his formal speech he startled Browning by pronouncing a florid eulogy upon them. Browning was too amazed to attend to the subject that evening; but the next morning met Disraeli on the Embankment and, finding him in a very genial mood, ventured on the inquiry: 'Was there not some slight discrepancy between the

of all kinds. The world to-day would not be the scene of the hideous chaos that it is, had it not been for the use of ambiguous phrases by the nations in the fifty-four international conferences which have been held since the War. No one can measure the extent to which this and other more radical mischief has been encouraged by the misuse of words in common talk and ephemeral writing.

Now I maintain that though our Association can only do a little it can do more than it has done. At first it would seem like calling upon a tiny group of thoughtful men and women to correct the influence of a multitude; to play the part of Mrs. Partington with her mop in days when the sea has become an ocean and the domestic utensil no bigger than it was of yore. But the objection, *Quid valeant pauci contra tot milia fortes?* is, as it invariably has been, quite irrelevant. There is always a moment in the growth of a pernicious habit when a judicious warning may check its further development. Could not our Association quietly assume the authority which by right belongs to it and take upon itself to withstand those errors in popular speech which are more than trivial: that is, that betray a dangerous but still curable muddle-headedness?

The method to adopt is a question I leave to others, only suggesting that we must not be afraid of publicity; the mischief we have to attack is public, many-headed, and widely diffused. Our assault upon it must be marked by vigilance, promptitude, and confidence; not by excess of modesty or too great unwillingness to step now and then on many toes.

I have a vision before me of a corner in the front page of *The Times* and other daily journals, where, on fitting occasions, should appear in impressive type a caustic mention of a popular slang use of some fine, dignified word, and along with that, a quotation from some great and half-forgotten author, of the same word in its proper signification. The appeal would be to the huge multitude, not unfairly described by the epithet 'semi-educated': for they are still able when the true and the false are fairly offered for their choice to recognize and cleave to the good and discard the bad. Thereby we should also keep alive the names of great writers who are in danger of oblivion. To bring this about, a little standing Committee should be carefully chosen, to act together, vested not with the authority of individual names but with the growing prestige of the English Association.

It is not for us to forecast success for any endeavour, but it may be emphatically said that if such action effected any result at all it could not be for harm, but might be for lasting benefit to an unknown number of our people.